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norama

UNITED FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

PA to award 2 scholarships

Robin Saxe | Internal Communications Committee

We are excited to announce that we will be presenting two \$1,000 scholarships this December. Please spread the word and encourage students you work with to apply by Dec. 1.

Application Process

Scholarship application forms are available at the Office of Institutional Advancement, Payne Hall 220, Mohawk Valley Community College,1101 Sherman Drive, Utica, NY 13501-5349.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must:

- Have completed at least 30 credit hours at MVCC at the time of application,
- Submit a current MVCC transcript reflecting a minimum 3.00 GPA,

- Include two letters of recommendation, and
- Write a 500-word essay on either The Importance of Labor Unions in American Society or The Value of a Community College Education.

The PA's Internal Communications Committee will review all completed applications, select the scholarship recipients, and forward the students' names to the Executive Board for approval.

The essays of the scholarship winners will be published in an upcoming issue of PAnorama.

The scholarships will be awarded during the Professional Association's annual January luncheon, with further recognition being cited during the MVCC college-wide scholarship luncheon in May.

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panorama EDITORIAL POLICY

Panorama is the voice of our local. In addition to the PA website (www.mvccpa.org), email, and bulletin boards, Panorama 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 of unionrelated 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, Political Action, and Research & 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

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR Robin Saxe

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WEBSITE www.mvccpa.org

Prez Desk Tenure

What is Tenure?

New York state does not have a law or regulation providing tenure (a "just cause" right) to community college members. Tenure, also often referred to as "continuing or career appointment" in many community



Norma Chrisman

college collective bargaining agreements, is a means to certain ends, specifically:

- Freedom of teaching, research, and extramural activities
- A sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability

"Freedom and economic security, hence tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and society." (From AAUP's Statement on Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure [1940].)

What does tenure do?

Generally, new community college employees are "on probation" for the first five years of their career. The specific time frame is dependent upon the provisions of the local collective bargaining agreement. During that probation period, the termination or nonreappointment of the member is generally not subject to review under the grievance or arbitration procedures of their collective bargaining agreement. When tenure, or continuing or career appointment, is granted, it is granted by the local community college's board of trustees on recommendation of the college president, following review of the probationary member.

Just cause and due process

"Just cause" is a principle that protects employees from arbitrary and capricious discipline and discharge by employers. Typically, just cause protections exist where unions negotiate such protections into collective bargaining agreements. Just cause is referenced in our PA contract in Article 4 un the Continuing and Career Appointment section.

New York does not have a law providing the "just cause" right of tenure to community college members. Therefore, these members must turn to their collective bargaining agreements to determine if there are any provisions addressing the issue of disciplining and discharging members. Since the principles of "just cause" are provided as contractual rights. However, there are some general principles that apply to all.

Prior to being eligible for "just cause" protections, a member typically serves a probationary period. During this period the member is often describes as an "at will" employee, meaning that the college can discipline and/or discharge the member without having to follow the detailed procedures of the "just cause" provision in the contract. After the member completes the probationary period, which is defined by the contract, the "just cause" provision will dictate the procedure and standards the college must follow if it attempts to discipline or discharge the member.

While the college may attempt to discipline or discharge a member for reasons such as insubordination or incompetence, it must provide the member with due process rights. Due process affords our members an opportunity to see the written charges levied against them, provides them with an opportunity to respond to such allegations, provides them the right to union representation and provides them the opportunity to proceed to a hearing before a neutral hearing officer. After the hearing, the member has the opportunity to call witnesses and cross-examine witnesses brought forth by the college. Remember, in "just cause" proceedings, the burden is upon the college to prove its case.

While a hearing officer will consider many factors, "just cause" also set certain criteria that may be examined. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Did the employee know, or should they have known the conduct in question could result in charges?
- Did the college perform a fair and reasonable investigation?
- Has the college consistently applied it rules among all employees?
- Is the level of punishment the college seeking reasonably related to the seriousness of the behavior?
- What is the employee's record of service?

While the criteria and standards will differ based on the contract and an arbitrator's interpretation, "just cause" provisions required that colleges afford our members due process rights that prevent colleges from acting in an arbitrary and capricious manner when it comes to imposing discipline upon our members. This protects our members from political agendas and personal vendettas while providing an environment fostering academic freedom.

Holiday ajar information for full-time employees

Please be advised that most College offices will close at the end of the day on Thursday, December 22, 2022, and will re-open on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

For PA and AMVA members, Columbus Day, Election Day, Veteran's Day, Lincoln's and Washington's Birthday have been designated as in lieu of days for the academic year 2021-2022 and will be observed during the ajar period. Excluded Administrative Staff and UPSEU members who wish to take time off during the ajar period may use accrued and unused vacation time, compensatory, and personal time (if applicable).

UPSEU employees, if accrued and unused vacation time, compensation, and personal time is not used employees must work the day before and after the holiday.

New Member Committee



New PA members welcomed with happy hour

Yue Riesbeck | New Member Committee

On Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2022, the PA's New Member Committee held its annual reception, giving the newest members of the PA family an opportunity to meet and socialize with their PA colleagues.

This year's event took the form of a happy hour. Pizza was served along with beer, wine, and soft drinks. Hope everyone had a chance to catch up, make new friends, and enjoy each other's company!







new members!

Durell Cull Natallia Dzeravenets Venancio Fuentes Sara Heinrich Julia Hobika Kshaw Paw James Roberts Erin Rooks Jackie Krouse Rudolph Jensen Saere Jaime Sangiacomo-Jackson Krystal Smith Devin Sonne Christine VanNamee Marie Veschusio John Welch

Promotion — Is it worth it?

Patti Antavanige | Promotions Committee

So, you've been at the College for some time now. Let's say, in September you started your second full year. Believe it or not, it's time to start thinking about the promotion process.

According to our collective bargaining agreement (CBA), individuals who reach three full years of service are eligible to apply for promotion (non-academic rank must have completed three full years by Dec. 31 of application year). After your promotion is effective, you are eligible to apply

for the next level after three years.

First, let's cover the promotion levels for both faculty and non-teaching professionals.

Faculty Rank	Non-Academic Rank
Instructor	Level 1
Assistant Professor	Level 2
Associate Professor	Level 3
Professor	Level 4

Second, with each new rank, PA members are entitled to additional benefits if they apply for promotion as denoted below.

FACULTY RANK

Rank Change	Salary Adjustment	Promotion Award	Additional Benefits
Instructor to Assistant Professor	Moved to Base Salary in CBA for Assistant Professor	\$1,500 added to new base salary	
Assistant Professor to Associate Professor	Moved to Base Salary in CBA for Associate Professor	\$2,000 added to new base salary	Eligible to receive Retirement Benefit up to \$50K to be used for health insurance costs.
Associate Professor to Professor	Move to Base Salary in CBA for Professor	\$2,500 added to new base salary	Eligible to receive Retirement Benefit up to \$50K to be used for health insurance costs.
			Receive a medal to recognize highest level of promotion.

NON-ACADEMIC RANK

Rank Change	Salary Adjustment	Promotion Award	Vacation Days	Additional Benefits
Level 1 to Level 2	Moved to the Base Salary in CBA for Level 2 within your specified grade.	\$1,500 added to new base salary.	Eligible to earn 4 more vacation days per aca- demic year. (Total 19)	
Level 2 to Level 3	Moved to the Base Salary in CBA for Level 3 within your specified grade.	\$2,000 added to new base salary.	Eligible to earn 4 more vacation days per aca- demic year. (Total:23)	Eligible to receive re- tirement benefit up to \$50K to be used for health insurance costs.
Level 3 to Level 4	Moved to the Base Salary in CBA for Level 4 within your specified grade.	\$2,500 added to new base salary.	Maintain 23 vacation days per academic year.	Eligible to receive re- tirement benefit up to \$50K to be used for health insurance costs. Receive a medal to recognize highest level of promotion.

2022: The new union boom?

Nicole Benton | Internal Communications Committee

If you Google articles about unions in 2022, you will find pages of search results talking about the importance and growth of unions during the year. There are also dozens of articles pointing to surges and increased interest in forming unions, especially within service industries, which have often been left out of union organizing in the past. Since last fall, petitions for organizing unions have increased by 60% as workers seek to improve working conditions, pay, and benefits across the board.

A Gallup survey released in August 2022 shows that 71% of Americans approve of labor unions compared to 64% pre-pandemic, and 40% of union members say their membership is "extremely important." This is the highest union approval rating in the U.S. since 1965 and equates to roughly 1 in 6 Americans living in a union household.

Time For a Change

Over the last few years, an explosion of factors have impacted the desire and need for strong unions — the pandemic, a surge of inequality, attacks on immigrants and people of color, and soaring student loan debt. Add inflation, school closures, housing and other shortages, and the system is stressed and ready for change. If you think about the last 10 years — Occupy Wall Street, the #MeToo movement, the rise of racial justice protests, teachers' strikes — the country is seeing that raising voices together can make change happen.

What's Different?

With so many factors happening all at once, it's either time to change or watch the system collapse completely. Workers, especially at places such as Starbucks and Amazon, are taking initiative and creating energy about key issues in the workplace. They're not waiting for union organizations to seek them out, they are learning from each other how to organize a union and file the appropriate paperwork — and they're doing it quickly.

Moving Forward Together

As both unions and workers look toward the future, it is clear that capitalizing on the interest and speed of recent movements and working together will be the key to success. Forming a union or winning the first contract is definitely the goal, but the work doesn't end there. Once new unions are formed, it is in the best interest of both existing and new unions to work together toward shifting the balance of power and improving working conditions for all workers.

Promotions continued

When moving from one faculty rank to another or level to another, there is a significant increase in base salary. Please refer to the current CBA (page 65) for more information. The contract can be found electronically here:

https://mvccpa.org/contract-constitution/

The PA in conjunction with HR holds Informational Sessions in the Spring semester regarding each part of our units' promotion process. If you are uncertain whether you are eligible to apply, please contact Nancy Wallace in Human Resources. There are specific timelines to this process. Promotion packets with appropriate timelines and requirements can be found on the HR password-protected part of the website here: <u>https://wwwsecure.mvcc.edu/</u> <u>human-resources/forms/index.php</u>

Norma Chrisman | PA President

The Central New York Labor Council hosted the 15th annual Samuel Gompers Distinguished Service Award Dinner on Friday, Oct. 28. The Samuel Gompers Distinguished Service Award recognizes and thanks individuals whose efforts have helped keep our unions strong. It is also an opportunity to model those traits that serve our movement and our communities so well: selfless dedication, belief in solidarity of collective action, practicing the ideals of democratic unionism, and helping to create a better life for our members. Eleven union activists, with service to healthcare, education, communication, and retail service, were honored at the dinner. The PA chose to recognize Robin Saxe for her service to the PA.

Robin began her career at MVCC in our Kiddie Campus and as a member of the PA in 2007. In spring 2015, Robin (and her colleagues at Kiddie Campus) lost their jobs due to budget cuts. While Robin accepted another College position in a different union, she remained optimistic that she would someday return to a position in the PA.





That day came in 2019, thanks in part to the retrenchment language in our contract. At that point, Robin vowed to become even more involved in the union and union activities. And that she did, diving in headfirst! She is always asking what she can do to help and doesn't shy away from adding more to her plate. She plays many roles in in the MVCCPA, including 2nd Vice President, chair of a few committees, and most importantly is a strong union member!

In the spring, a brick with Robin's name on it will be added to the Workers' Monument walkway in Ilion, joining past PA recipients:

- Ted Moore (2008)
- Bill Perrotti (2009)
- Sam Drogo (2010)
- Ellis Searles (2011)
- Marie Czarnecki (2012)
- Alison Doughtie (2013)
- Paul Halko (2014)
- Dawson McDermott (2015)
- Patti Antanavige (2016)
- Norma Chrisman (2017)
- Jim Henck (2018)
- Justin Wilcox (2018)
- Aaron Fried (2021)

Politics?! You bet!

By Alison Doughtie | Political Outreach Committee

Eeew. Politics. Am I right? These days, the topic of politics is more difficult than ever, but our union's involvement in politics remains as important as ever.

Our local politicians are involved in making fundamental decisions about College operations that impact faculty and professional staff (for example, our budget and our contract). Our participation and voice in politics are essential to the health of the Professional Association and its members, and more generally, to our state and federal organizations—NYSUT (New York State United Teachers) and AFT (American Federation of Teachers).

The Professional Association has always been active and non-partisan in its politics. Locally, we have supported candidates for the Oneida County Board of Legislators and for County Executive who have demonstrated their support for us and the College. We have endorsed candidates from both political parties. In fact, our endorsement policy explicitly states, "A candidate's political party affiliation will not be a consideration." Our endorsement policy lays out the criteria the Political Outreach Committee considers for its endorsement recommendations:

- Consideration foremost of endorsement of those incumbents whose records have been substantially in support of the legislative issues affecting the Professional Association and the College, such as the MVCC budget, the PA contract, and MVCC capital projects.
- 2. Consideration of endorsement of candidates whose statements reflect knowledge of the value of MVCC to Oneida County and the

College's role in economic development.

- 3. Consideration of endorsement of candidates who demonstrate awareness of the need to recruit and retain highly qualified faculty and staff and the impact that has on the College's reputation and its competitiveness in the education marketplace.
- 4. Consideration of making an endorsement or remaining neutral in open races when both candidates support the College's and the PA's interests.

NYSUT and AFT—our state and national organizations—also endorse those candidates who have proven themselves to be supporters of public education. While PA members work through activities such as NYSUT's Lobby Day and Committee of 100 to inform state representatives about the work we do and how increased funding will benefit our members and our students, we cannot endorse state or federal politicians. NYSUT and AFT do that work on our behalf.

In all of these efforts, none of your union dues are used. All political action is paid for by funds raised through NYSUT's "VOTE-COPE," NYSUT's voluntary, non-partisan advocacy fund. PA leadership has always understood the importance of contributing to VOTE-COPE and has had healthy membership participation in VOTE-COPE fundraising efforts. In fact, the PA has won several awards for our local contributions to VOTE-COPE. When we are politically active, politicians know us, our efforts, and our needs. Without our and NYSUT's advocacy and political involvement, we would not be near the table in decisions that affect our professional lives. If you don't already contribute to VOTE-COPE, please consider it.

Community Outreach

Robin Saxe | Community Outreach Committee

The Community Outreach Committee has been busy as always! This summer was a wonderful time to get out into the community and participate in some of our regular events.

PA members participated in the United Way Day of Giving at Kemble Park in Utica. It was a beautiful sunny day for painting sidewalks and installing activity posts.

Saranac Thursday was up and running again this summer

with the MVCCPA members pouring on the very first night. While the event wasn't super busy the volunteers had a great time.

We collected school supplies for Kernan elementary again this back-to-school season. Dan Eddy and I had a great time dropping of the supplies to the sixth-grade leadership group. We sat with them during their lunch and listened as they presented their ideas for future partnerships between the leadership group and PA. These amazing students are working to collect food for others in the school that may not have enough to eat at home. They have asked us to work with them to increase their food supply especially with the upcoming school







Community Outreach



holiday breaks. We will be collecting for them at different points of the semester, but you are always welcome to drop off items in PH104H. They are looking for nonperishable, quick, easy meals that younger children would be able to prepare with little or no supervision.

The Relay for Life was a fantastic event, and we were so happy to be able to supply water bottles as gifts for the participating survivors.

Other events included participating in the Shadow Walk for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer on Oct. 21, the Intergenerational Clean-Up on Oct. 22 and 23, and handing out candy during the Halloween on the Green event in Rome on Oct. 28. We also are creating a display for the Ziyara Shriner's Utica FEZtival of trees.

Watch for emails from me for volunteer opportunities and other ways you can get involved.



Donations from last semester's PA dinner were delivered to Abraham House.

PA Finances

Ross Wittenberg | PA Treasurer

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

Dues Structure for 2022-23

Dues are paid by all members, including both teaching faculty and professional staff. The bulk of our local union budget is paid for by our membership dues.

Our budget consists of expected expenditures for community outreach, member engagement, training, and negotiations and grievances with the college. A portion of dues collected are paid to our affiliates. New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Our affiliations date back to 1970 and we receive numerous benefits resulting from these affiliations, such as training for Executive Board members, legal advice, and advice and guidance for our local PA leaders. 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 as they arise.

Dues that are paid by members are set nationally, statewide, and locally. AFT is responsible for national dues and 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. The dues structure for the 2022-23 academic year was approved at our membership meeting in May. This past year, we decreased local dues for members by \$52 annually (\$2 per paycheck). Over the past few years, we have had fewer grievances with the college than in the past, and as a result, our fund balance has increased. We chose to decrease local member dues to pass these savings back to the members. With lower local member dues now in place, we will monitor our fund balance in the upcoming years to determine if any additional changes should be made.

Financial Results for 2021-22

In 2021, the membership approved a local budget of \$226,876.88. During the 2021-22 academic year, we underspent the budget by \$38,384.49, but also received \$5,716.65 less cash inflows than expected. This variance was primarily caused by lower pass-through dues to NYSUT and AFT (due to lower-than-budgeted membership) and fewer grievances against the college resulting in less spent on arbitration. This surplus allowed us to decrease local member dues for the 2022-23 academic year, as stated in the previous section.

Financial records for the 2021-22 fiscal year were examined by our Audit Committee in May. The Audit Committee found proper financial reporting had occurred throughout the year and had no recommendations.

If you have any questions related to the budget or the dues structure, please feel free to contact me or plan to attend our next membership meeting. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to continuing in my role as Treasurer this year. I wish you all the best this semester.

Member Profile

Devin Sonne

Instructor, School of STEM Transfer

In 2012, I started at MVCC as a returning adult student. After a previous career in sales and manufacturing, and a lifelong appreciation for the sciences, I wanted to study mechanical engineering with a career goal of technical sales. But once I took my first chemistry class with Joyce Baumann, I was hooked and I decided to switch to chemical. As a student I was also extremely involved in student activities at MVCC. My extracurricular included Student Congress President, founding of the Environmental Sustainability Club, and Program Board Director. I graduated from MVCC in 2015 with an A.S. in Liberal Arts and Sciences: Chemistry. That year I was honored to be awarded the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence.

I transferred to the University of Rochester, where I earned a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a B.S. in Chemical Engineering. While there, I was a teaching assistant for Environmental



Science and was hired as a research assistant in the Department of Public Health, studying the affect of natural gas extraction (fracking) on drinking water quality. I came back to MVCC in the Fall of 2018 as an Adjunct Instructor and Professional Tutor in the Learning Commons. Teaching that Fall solidified my passion for teaching at the college level so I enrolled in a graduate program at SUNY-ESF for the following academic year to study Environmental Chemistry. My graduate work focused on microplastic pollution in urban freshwater bodies. While waiting for an academic position to open I joined Kerry Bio-Science in Norwich as a Health, Safety, and Environmental Manager. Despite Kerry being a wonderful company, I couldn't resist the opportunity to apply for the full-time chemistry instructor position at MVCC when it opened up and am beyond ecstatic to be teaching one of my favorite subjects at one of my favorite places in the world!

Outside of MVCC, I like to be active in the community, and, along with my family, have I volunteered for the CNY Tour de Cure and Ride for Missing Children for many years. Additionally, I have done science outreach in schools, in the community, and by volunteering at the Boys and Girls Club in Rochester. I have, additionally, been a mentor with the Young Scholars program through Utica University since 2020.

— by Yue Riesbeck

Member Profile

Brandon Walcutt

Instructor, School of Business & Hospitality

What is your official title here?

Assistant Professor.

What degree(s) do you have?

BA Business Administration/International Business and an MBA.

Where were you employed before MVCC?

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea.

What attracted you to MVCC?

Beyond wanting to hire me, I really liked the diversity of both the college and the local city. Moving from overseas with a multinational family, I felt the college and local community would be understanding and welcoming.

When did you start working here?

September 2017.

What would you say is the most fascinating thing about your life?

It is either that I have spent almost half my life living and working overseas or that I started my first business selling rabbits/meat when I was 14.

What do you like to do outside of work?

I love to garden, tinker around in my shop or help new entrepreneurs launch their businesses.

What is one of your favorite "classroom moments"?

One of my favorite "classroom moments" was when one of my students walked up to me and told me that he had wanted to go into politics, but now he wanted to be an ECONOMIST. I felt like Dr. Frankenstein and had created a monster (in a good way, of course!)

— by Sam McManus



Member Profile

Monica Brown-Hodkinson,

Student Support Advisor, School of Public & Human Services

What degrees do you have?

I have a BS in Human Behavior and an MS in Organization & Communication.

Where did you go to school?

Utica University, formerly Utica College.

Where did you work before MVCC?

I was actually the first and last full-time student and full-time employee at Utica University. I was employed there for 11 years. I worked as an Administrative Assistant in Residence Life; I was the Coordinator of Student Activities; and before I came to MVCC I was a Student Success Coach.

What attracted you to the position you are in?

While I was at Utica College my coworker learned about this position that was still being built. She thought I was a perfect fit, because it was something I would be able to help build from the ground up. Multiple offices were being combined and I was able to come in from the outside and help with everything from policy to procedure, and I was able to put my degree in organization into play. That and all the benefits that came from a permanent position at a place like MVCC were too good to pass by.

What is your family life like?

My husband and partner, Kevin, is my best friend. I also have three boys — Alex, Terrel and Josiah, the youngest, who just started college. We have two guinea pigs, Flip and Dip, a pitbull/boxer mix we rescued named Maxx, and a grandfurbaby, my son's dog Tyson, who spends a lot of time at my house.

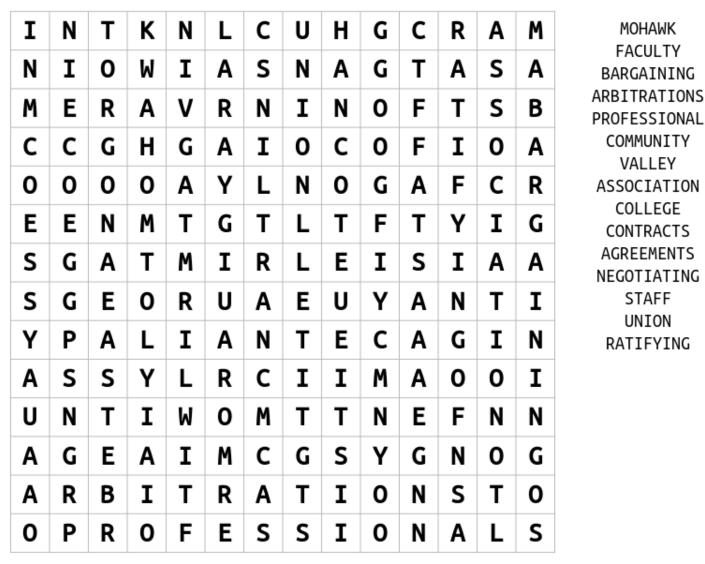
What do you like to do outside of work?

I have a TON of things — I love to cook; I love to walk; I love to go to museums. Church is a big part of my life. I like to entertain and host and celebrate. And I am addicted to clothes shopping.

— by Justin Johnson

Word Search

PAnorama Wordsearch



Play this puzzle online at : https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/4147072/

PA sponsors team in NHTA's Drives Against Breast Cancer

Nick Evanoff

On Sept. 24, Nick Evanoff, AJ Stepanick, Scott Selden, and Jared Hensel represented the MVCCPA-sponsored golf team in the third annual New Hartford Teachers' Association Drives Against Breast Cancer at Crystal Springs Golf Course in Vernon.

The team finished in second place, shooting a

five under 65. There were five skins awarded for lowest score on a hole in the tournament, and the PA team won two of them for a total of \$144, which they opted to donate back to the cause. It was a great turnout for the event with a full field and great weather. A special thank-you to the NHTA, Crystal Springs, the MVCCPA, and Norma Chrisman for sponsoring the MVCC team and having us be a part of this great event.