



***Help us build a strong Adjunct Faculty Organization and a better College!***

# **Adjunct Faculty Organization News**

<b>HFCC-AFO</b>
<b>AFT Local 337</b>
<b>AFT, AFL-CIO</b>
<b>March, 2016</b>

## **News from the President**

By Mary Beck

As I reflect on the struggles facing unions since I became the President of the Adjunct Faculty Organization in 2008, I'm aware of the many gains that we've made to become a stronger union today than when the "Right to Work" law was passed in Michigan in 2013. Although the law does not affect the AFO until our current contract ends in August 2017, our membership rate ranks as one of the highest in the country for adjunct unions. Our current membership is now at 87%, thanks to adjuncts who know the value of a union and the organizing efforts of our staff organizer, Valerie Cullin, who has been making the rounds to meet with adjuncts and provide education about our union. AFO members know that injustices are corrected and change occurs through our collective voice.

Although the Supreme Court case (Friedrichs vs. California Teachers Association) has temporarily been paused due to the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, it is a matter of time before the next legal challenge occurs or the next legislative effort to destroy unions is enacted. My sentiments were eloquently stated by Earl Newman, a recently retired adjunct at HFCC: "I read about the assaults on organized labor all over this country and I am so thankful we at HFCC have been able to swim against the tide of rejection." I encourage you to sign your recommit card indicating your continued support for the AFO. If you haven't already signed

a card, please contact Valerie (vjcullin@hfcc.edu) or a member of the AFO Executive Board who will meet with you as soon as possible.

The AFO continues to involve our members in creating a union that is responsive to your needs. The recently formed Class Assignment Committee will examine our current contractual language on class assignments, identify problems and issues that have been raised thus far, and ultimately make recommendations to our members. From the time of our first contract negotiations in 2009, the class assignment article has been the most controversial. It's time to explore possible changes. I was pleased to hear from 28 members who expressed an interest in being a part of this committee. As a result, elections were held in five divisions. This is proof that our members are actively involved and want to contribute to the AFO. I encourage you to contact the following members of the committee with your input on this important issue: Dave Barnaby (Trades and Tech), Eve Chowdhury (Business and Computers), Mark Evans

(Social Science, Fine Arts and Fitness), Lovie Little (Health Careers), Margaret Meade (Communications), Victoria Morris (Library and TLS), and Michael Rintz (Mathematics and Science).

Lastly, don't miss the scholarship opportunities for AFO members and their dependents, including grandchildren. The HFCC Founder's Scholarship Fund plans on awarding two \$1,000 scholarships in memory of our two AFO founding fathers, Joseph Sorokac Jr. and Peter Grant. Applications can be found on the AFO website (hfcc-afo.org). The application deadline is May 13, 2016.

### **Winter 2016**

#### **General Membership Meeting**

**Friday, April 8 @ 3:30 p.m. in K-11**

**(On the lower level of the Reuther Liberal Arts Building)**

**See page three for full agenda**

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# In Memoriam-Ken Matedne and Elizabeth Powell

By Valerie Cullin

The Communications Division suffered a tragic loss this past month with the untimely passing of two adjunct professors, Ken Matedne and Elizabeth Powell.

Katherine Grahl, the former Associate Dean of Communications, shared the following with me about Ken:

"I hired Ken in 2012; he taught Fall 2012 for the first time and every semester since. He taught both developmental writing and composition classes. He was extremely dedicated and always 'went the extra mile'---he would make time for his students both before and after class, stepped up to help whenever a sub was needed, and met all of his contractual responsibilities flawlessly."



Delisa Leonard, a Communications Division adjunct and close friend of Ken Matedne, had this to share about her friend and colleague: "I first met him when he was assigned as an assistant to my classroom at Davenport

University. He had just graduated with his Master's and had taken the job there in hopes of getting a teaching position, which he did get after that semester. After that, I found out Katherine was looking for someone so I suggested him. I know that Ken left a better paying job to go into teaching. He told me once that part of it was that he didn't feel like he found his purpose at the other job and that money wasn't enough to make him happy. He wanted to find that purpose with his teaching and by being of service. He definitely accomplished that. I know he ran the soup kitchen with Sarah Pettigrew and he also worked at Davenport

University in Livonia and Warren and he was a substitute teacher. One of the teachers he worked with posted on Facebook about how much he meant to her and her students. He just never stopped going and he was always happy to help out with anything anyone needed."

Kim Occhipinti, also a Communications Division adjunct and close friend of Ken's shared this about him:

"Professionally, Ken was dedicated to maintaining lexical integrity. He loved words. We talked several times a week about 'place of origin' and 'history of usage'. We made judgement calls on usage. But he never considered a word to be bastardized. His curriculum contained assignments that required students to share in this love. He made activities using 'Freerice', a vocabulary game we would share online. Personally, Ken loved mixing coffee and hot chocolate. We oftentimes lamented the adjunct salary, and would come up with different ways to save money on those two items. He would bring me instant coffee packs from Dollar Tree, and I would bring a Swiss Miss hot chocolate packet to share from home. We would spot each other quarters for the 3rd level adjunct beverage can. He would treat me to a donut for every scone I baked him. To me, his life was lived quietly. His small apartment in Wyandotte housed a modest bookcase that reflected his love of teaching and knowledge. He had a small mahogany desk placed in front of the bookcase; his laptop sat atop the desk. Much like the rest of us, he would have a stack of student papers resting near the laptop. I sincerely hope I have created an image that does his soul justice. I miss my friend."

Jessica Garlitz, an ELI adjunct instructor in the Communications



Division and close friend of Elizabeth Powell had this to share about her friend and colleague:

"Elizabeth ('Beth') Powell dedicated over 7 years of her life as an experienced and dedicated adjunct instructor at HFC. Having a Master's degree which trained and permitted her to teach English as a Second Language, she was a very gifted English immersion instructor. She was also a licensed secondary education teacher working as a substitute teacher in various districts, including Dearborn Public Schools. Most of her HFC teaching career involved teaching English as a Second language through the ELI to intermediate/advanced level ELL students. HFC students were fortunate enough to have her as their teacher no matter which semester it was as Beth taught year-round. Her passions were history and English--especially British history and literature. She loved to play trivia, partake in pub quizzes, and participate in quiz bowls with her colleagues. About two years ago, Beth was entrusted with the care of a small dog that she loved as if it was her own child. Her family was extremely important to her, especially her niece and nephews. Beth was a fast-paced, energetic person who was willing to help out anyone in need. Her family has requested that anyone wishing to honor Beth's memory do so by making a donation in her honor to the Humane Society."

Charles Wesserling, also an ELI Instructor in the Communications Division and a good friend of Elizabeth Powell's shared this about her:

"I had the pleasure of counting Elizabeth 'Beth' Powell as both

# Options for Dental Coverage

By Valerie Cullin

The contract between Guardian Dental Insurance and the AFO will terminate in August and will not be renewed.

I have explored several options that may be beneficial to any adjuncts that may need to continue with dental coverage.

The first insurance is called DenCap Dental Plans. DenCap Dental Plans has been in business since 1984, and they are certified by the following entities:

- Certified by the Affordable Care Act
- Certified as a Detroit Headquartered/Small Business (DHSB)
- Certified as a Wayne County Small Business Enterprise, Targeted Growth Community Enterprise, and Wayne County Based Enterprise.

They offer student plans for as low as \$24 a month, individual plans for anyone 18 and over for as low as \$29, and senior plans for anyone 50 years of age and up for as low as \$27 per month. It highlights the following items:

- No Deductibles
- No Claim Forms
- Large Network of Dentists throughout Southeastern Michigan
- No waiting period for Primary Care Dentistry



There is a dental network of over 130 locations to choose from, and you may change dental locations at any time; there is not a

waiting period to do so. The website is [dencap.net](http://dencap.net) if you would like to look at the specific plans that are available.

The second dental insurance plan you may want to consider is one that I use, but it is through only one doctor who is Downriver in the city of Wyandotte. It is called the Dental Discount Plan and it is \$100 for an individual plan and renews each year in August, or \$150 for a family plan with the same renewal period. This fee includes one regular cleaning, two x-rays, and an exam fully covered each year for each family member. It also includes a 25% discount on all dental services beyond the ones I just mentioned. You can check out this plan at: [www.painless-dentistry.com](http://www.painless-dentistry.com)

## In Memoriam continued

friend and colleague for many years. I met Beth when she and I were both substitute teaching at Fordson High School. Beth had a real love for teaching English; she taught in the English Department as well as the English Language Institute, and it was in the ELL that her true gifts as an instructor were revealed. In addition to teaching writing, and grammar, and reading skills to second language learners, Beth also loved sharing aspects of American culture to her students. She would entertain them with segments from *That 70's Show*, or classic TV commercials. I think the one aspect of American culture that she really loved sharing with her classes was the lifestyles of the

Amish. For some reason, her students just loved reading about them and watching documentaries about this unique lifestyle. Beth loved to play trivia, and would regularly compete at the monthly trivia game contests at the Gaelic League in Detroit, and also at the HFC trivia contest held at the end of the Winter semester. She was a firm believer in the Birth Order Effect, and as the middle child, she fit the prototype of a social, people-pleasing good friend."

They will both be missed by their students and their colleagues, and I thank the individuals who contributed to this article for sharing their thoughts regarding Ken and Elizabeth.

### Agenda

#### General Membership Meeting

Friday, April 8, 2016

3:30 p.m.—K11

#### Reuther Liberal Arts Building

- Welcome
- Status of AFO 337 and union affairs
- 2016-17 FY Budget
  - Discussion
  - Motion for approval
- Nominations for Executive Board Positions
- New Business

**The general membership meeting is the legislative body of the AFO. Make your voice heard by attending this important meeting!**

**Only members of AFO are welcome and encouraged to attend the meeting. Non-members, including agency fee payers, may not attend the membership meetings.**



# Think Spring



## AFO Office Hours

**The AFO Office is in Room  
N-004 on the lower level of  
the Campus Safety Building**

**Tuesdays: 9:00—11:00 am  
3:30—5:00 pm**  
**Thursday: 9:00—11:00 am  
3:30—5:00 pm**  
**Friday: By Appointment**

**If you need immediate  
assistance and the office is  
closed, call 313.845.9707.**

## Special Recognition Earl Newman

By Mary Beck

With much gratitude and appreciation, we congratulate AFO member, Earl Newman, on his recent retirement. Earl began teaching as an adjunct instructor in the Social Science Division in 1987, while employed full-time at Wayne State University in the College of Life-long Learning in an academic staff position and in administrative positions. He had previously been on the faculty of the College of Education at MSU and had been a high school principal in Midland County.



Earl's wealth of experience and wisdom was evident when he was on the committee to develop the Adjunct Evaluation process that is being used in all divisions. Earl was the voice that made sure our evaluation process was fair and objective. He was also a member of the AFO Finance Committee since the beginning of our union and contributed long hours to the financial review every summer. We could always count on Earl's measured, succinct and logical comments at the AFO General Membership meetings and as a spokesperson at a Board of Trustee meeting during our quest for adjunct inclusion in governance.

In Earl's parting message to me, he wrote:

"I've always said that I would keep teaching until I got it right. Of course, I've always known that I would never really get it right. I would not have continued trying this long, however, were it not for the union. You and our other union leaders have breathed life into this organization in ways the board and administration cannot appreciate or imagine. The AFO has given adjunct faculty a degree of dignity, security, energy, and increased relevance that has made teaching here more fun than it was for the previous twenty years, as I saw it, and I am pretty sure many others feel the same way.

I am sorry to relinquish my teaching duties and my position at HFCC, but not as sorry as I am to leave the fellowship of the AFO. I truly have enjoyed my participation in union activities and I will miss the meetings and the related project activities and just the enjoyment of interacting with colleagues. Thank you for everything you have done to create a viable union presence at HFCC and for being a good friend."

Earl was a strong supporter of the AFO and of Henry Ford College, as well as a friend. I'll miss his wisdom and his ability to see the big picture as he provided guidance to me in some challenging situations. It's my hope that Earl's use of logic and reason, along with his underlying convictions of fairness and justice, will continue to inspire us.