



Help us build a strong AFO and a Better College

**HFC-AFO
News**

HFC-AFO News

January, 2019

Ten Years After: First Contract Celebration Set for May 10



Charter members of the AFO met during the fall of 2008 to discuss their top issues: pay and job security

By Sherry Morgan and
Bill Norris

This spring the AFO will observe the tenth anniversary of our first contract. Our plans are not yet final, but we're asking that you keep the afternoon free on Saturday May 10. We want you and your family to help us celebrate!

An overwhelming majority of eligible adjuncts voted to recognize the AFO as our legal bargaining agent in an election supervised by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission in May, 2008. Salary and job security were identi-

fied as the top bargaining priorities during our first general membership meeting that August.

At the time, there were 28 Michigan community colleges and HFC adjuncts were the lowest paid of all. Instructors with years of experience were assigned classes at the whim of administrators—many of whom were well-intentioned which isn't the same as saying they were always fair.

Tom Anderson—our lead negotiator—argued that there was a correlation between our working conditions and our students' learning conditions. The College's bargaining team

talked about how much it was going to cost to repair the parking lots.

We asked our members to help.

We circulated petitions both within the College and the wider Dearborn community. We met with student organizations and talked to the local press—Mary Beck, the AFO's first president, was a guest on a WDET program. And, most effectively, we packed Board meetings.

A dozen of us were at the December, 2008 Board meeting. Twenty of us showed up for the January meeting. By March, the adjoining room was opened and additional chairs were needed to accommodate some 60+ adjuncts and supporters.

The combination of the pressure brought by our membership and friends and our win-win bargaining strategy finally brought us close to an agreement on a Friday afternoon in April. We were hoping the management team would budge on the few remaining issues when Beth Davis, the then HR Director, and Marge

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The *Adjunct Faculty Organization News* is the official newsletter of the HFC-AFO Adjunct Faculty Organization; American Federation of Teachers Local 337. AFL-CIO

AFO Executive Board

- **Lynn Boza, President**
- **William (Bill) Norris, Vice President**
- **Edgar Johns, Grievance Officer**
- **Lorena Bencsik, Treasurer**
- **Sherry Morgan, Financial Records Secretary**
- **Margaret Green, Recording Secretary**

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You can contact any Executive Board member by office telephone (313.845-9707), email (AFO@hfcc.edu), or by sending a letter through either interoffice or U.S. mail.

AFO Office Hours

The AFO Office is located in Room-N006, on the lower level of Building N, the Campus Safety Building.

Monday:	9:00 to 10:00, 12:00 to 2:00, 3:30 to 6:00 (W. Norris)
Tuesday:	10:00 to 3:00 (L. Boza)
Wednesday:	9:00 to 10:00, 12:00 to 2:00 (W. Norris)
Thursday:	Office Closed
Friday:	9:00 to 10:00 (W. Norris)

Also by appointment.

We may be out of the office for a scheduled, or unscheduled, meeting during posted hours. In such instances or in case of an emergency, you can call or text Bill Norris on his cell phone: 248-977-8897

Tragedy Interrupted First Contract Talks

(Continued from front page)

Swan, then the CFO—were suddenly called out of the room. The next thing we knew, we were in lockdown.

That was April 10, 2009, the day of a murder-suicide in the Fine Arts Building. A distraught male student had taken his own life and that of another student who had spurned his advances. As tense as the situation was for those of us on the bargaining team, it was much more intense for those adjuncts who were among the only staff at work in the Fine Arts building on that Friday afternoon.

The tragedy necessitated a two-week pause in our contract talks as the College mourned the loss and began a review of security procedures and vulnerability. When we sat down again, it wasn't long before we reached an agreement.

On April 27, 2009, we reached across the table to shake hands with the Board's bargaining team and posed for pictures.

Our first contract made substantial headway toward securing pay equity and job security for our members.

We knew at the time that we had a lot more work to do and we know now that today's challenges threaten our future as an organization. We believe that the AFO's future is worth fighting for and that our past is worth celebrating. We hope you will join us to do so on the second Saturday in May.

A packed audience listens as Glenn O'Kray, the AFO's first vice president, addresses the HFCC Board of Trustees in February, 2009. Pressure brought by adjuncts and our supporters, including our full-time colleagues, combined with the AFO's win-win bargaining strategy, led to our first contract in May, 2009.



Scholarship Board Thanked

The Executive Board has approved a motion to dissolve the Founders Scholarship Fund and thanks the scholarship fund board members for their service.

The scholarship fund was established to honor the memory of founding member Joe Sorokac, a psychology adjunct, who passed away soon after the AFO was recognized. A year later, another founding member, trades and apprentice adjunct Pete Grant, passed away and after that scholarships were awarded in his memory as well.

Throughout its existence, the scholarship board was chaired by Joe's widow, Dottie Pelton, another founding member who teaches political science. Mary Beck, the AFO's first president, was an enthusiastic supporter and scholarship board member secretary.

Other scholarship board members include Bill Breger (Business), Tim Egan (Business) Bill Norris (Sociology), Greg Osowski (Criminal Justice) Donna Palmer, (Psychology), and Maria Sepulveda (Psychology).

In recent years, a number of Board members have retired and fundraising has been less successful. Last winter, the Board decided to award all remaining funds and recommended that the AFO Executive Board pass the motion to dissolve.

During its nine years of operation the Scholarship Board awarded a total of \$31,000 to 25 scholarship winners. While the AFO donated some funds, most of the funding came from voluntary individual contributions. Dottie and Mary and other contributors deserve praise because the work they did made a difference in the lives of so many adjuncts and their dependents.



Dottie Pelton, Chair of the Founder's Scholarship Board, selling tickets at the 2012 Joe Sorokac Chili Bowl Cookoff. The Cookoff boosted morale and raised funds for the HFCC-AFO Founders Scholarship fund.

Two Ways to Get Involved!

By Bill Norris, AFO VP

Adjuncts are heterogeneous—we have different needs, different priorities, and different stories. Not every adjunct is able and willing to “get involved,” but there are good reasons for doing so if you are able.

If you’re at the beginning of your career and especially if you are hoping to escape the adjunct army by landing a full-time position, getting involved might equate to a couple of lines on your C.V. Describing your experience and service on, say, the Scholastics Policy Committee will look impressive and might spell the difference between a job offer and a rejection letter especially if you can talk about the process intelligently during an interview.

On the other hand, if you’re at the end of your career, like me, the reasons for getting involved are less “extrinsic” and more “intrinsic.” Intrinsic reasons for wanting to get involved would include something like “wanting to make a difference.”

One way that every adjunct—even free riders—can get involved is by taking advantage of the unique opportunities to participate in governance and professional development

activities that Henry Ford extends to adjuncts.

Adjunct representatives to the Faculty Senate, the various councils, and some standing committees are elected at-large or by specific constituencies. However, some standing committees welcome walk-on members and professional development opportunities are likewise open to all faculty.

Thanks to the AFO, adjuncts are compensated for participation in governance and professional development activities. The compensation isn’t enough and varies depending on the assignment and is subject to certain limits.

Few colleges give adjuncts the voice in college governance that we enjoy here. This fact and the fact that we are compensated for governance and professional development activities did not happen by accident.

Our “Statement of Principles” — originally crafted during our first contract negotiations and unchanged since— says “adjunct faculty and professionals should be invited to participate in departmental meetings and other committees with voting privileges and should be compensated for doing so.” The fight to

get adjunct voices recognized was long and hard.

The reasons the college constitution was changed were many and complex, but the biggest reason it was changed to give adjuncts a voice was because Mary Beck, Tom Anderson, and the rest of us in the AFO refused to take no for an answer. And the only reason we’re paid for our voices and professional development activities is because of the persistence of several AFO bargaining committees.

We weren’t just looking for a few extra dollars in our paychecks. What we were looking for was spelled out in Aretha Franklin’s great song: R-E-S-P-E-C-T.

So it has been a little disappointing when we’ve heard whispers that some adjuncts sit on committees just to collect some extra pay. If you are elected to represent adjuncts or if you walk on to a committee, take your responsibility seriously and remember that you represent other adjuncts, not just yourself.

A Second Way to Get Involved: Help Us Build a Stronger Union

Becoming an AFO member is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your fellow adjuncts. The more of us who choose membership, the stronger we are. And the more active our members are, the stronger we are.

We need members who show up for meetings and who are willing to serve on our important committees including the election committee, financial review committee, bargaining committee, and our executive board. The AFO is, of course, a voluntary organization and committee assignments are uncompensated.

The AFO does, however, provide some compensation to officers who regularly perform administrative and organizing duties. Payroll costs are approved by the membership as part of the budget process.

Mentor Training Calling all senior adjuncts!

We will be training senior adjuncts to become mentors for new hire adjuncts. Give a helping hand to new adjuncts and earn a little extra cash by mentoring them and showing them how to be successful at HFC!

The mentor training is offered in a single four-hour session or two two-hour sessions. Four trainings are scheduled. Per our contract, senior adjuncts are compensated for attending this training.

1. February 19 and 21 at 10-12p
2. March 1 at 10-2p
3. March 19 and 21 at 10-12p
4. March 29 at 10-2p.

e-mail Edgar Johns at efjohns@hfcc.edu and let him know which training you will attend.

Forecast for Next Ten Years: Cloudy

Imagine where you want the AFO to be ten years from now. Now, identify three things that we are going to need if we hope to get there.

By the AFO Executive Board

We all agree that the first thing we're going to need to do is get more people involved. We need more adjuncts to choose membership.

We don't just need more members. We need more members who will come to meetings. And we need more members to step up and volunteer for committee and leadership positions.

Organizing is a job that is never done. Laws passed by Michigan's Republican government and recent court decisions have made it harder for us to do so. No matter where you want the AFO to be ten years from now, we won't get there if our membership is weak.

What's the next most important thing? "Team-work" according to AFO President Lynn Boza. "We

are part of the College community. We need to recognize that the whole community needs to swim together or we're all going to sink together. The College needs money to operate."

HFC has three primary sources of revenue—state appropriations, student tuition, and the millage paid by Dearborn property owners (and a few in Dearborn Heights). Last winter, a "super-majority" of AFO members voted to contribute \$10,000 to the HFC Millage Renewal Fund.

Other employee groups, including our full-time colleagues in Local 1650, also made significant contributions to the millage fund. Our collective contributions were an investment in the College's future.

President Kavalhuna acknowledged that his stomach was in knots on election night. This may have been especially so because there was an active "vote no" campaign.

While the college is Dearborn's and we do depend on Dearborn students and Dearborn tax payers, HFC is unique among Michigan's 28 community colleges. We rely less on millage and state appropriations (which have been declining for years) and more on out-of-



AFO President Lynn Boza and psychology adjunct Susan Weldon (third and fourth from left) celebrate on election night with College President Russell Kavalhuna and Local 1650 President John MacDonald. We're going to have to team with the entire college community if we hope to achieve our short and long-term goals.

district student tuition dollars. And, as a result, declining enrollment which is a problem for all of Michigan's community colleges is more of a problem for us than most of the other guys.

Reversing the trend is going to require teamwork and the win-win bargaining strategy that has characterized the AFO from its inception.

Lynn meets regularly with President Kavalhuna and other College leaders, including Local 1650 President John MacDonald who has long been a supporter of and mentor to the AFO.

Declining enrollment isn't just a problem for adjuncts. It's a problem for all of us in the College community: full- and part-time faculty and support staff, administrators, property owners, employers, and our students.

The third thing we're going to have to maintain is a win-win relationships with President Kavalhuna and the Board.

When the AFO started organizing a decade ago, pay levels at HFC were at the bottom of a list of Michigan's 28 community colleges. Today we are closer to the middle.

If our goal is to be at or near the top ten years from now, we will need to make sure President Kavalhuna and the Board recognize the value we bring to the College community.

You can help by continuing to work hard for your students' success, by taking an extra step to save an at-risk student, and making sure your friends and those in your social network know you're proud to work for the College and of what the College does. You can help by helping us build a strong AFO and a better College!

An advertisement for "The Union Plus Scholarship Difference". It features a laptop screen showing a scholarship application form. Text on the screen includes "The Union Plus Scholarship Difference" and "Helping AFT members and their children attend college". Below the screen, it says "\$150,000 in awards ranging from \$500 to \$4,000 are available annually to students attending college, trade or graduate schools." and "The Union Plus Scholarship application is now available..". At the bottom, it says "The Deadline is January 31, 12pm (noon), Eastern Time." and includes logos for AFT and UNION PLUS.

We need you! Winter General Membership Meeting March 22

Tentative Agenda Winter General Membership Meeting Friday, March 22 @ 3:00 PM in K-11

- **Call to Order/Welcome**
- **Approval of Agenda**
- **Approval of Fall 2018 Meeting Minutes**
- **President's Message**
 - **10-Year Anniversary Celebration**
 - **Contract Enforcement/Contract Planning**
- **Treasurer's and Financial Records Secretary**
 - **Current year-to-date actual to budget comparison**
 - **Upcoming year budget proposal**
- **Nominations and Approval of 2019-20 Elections Committee**
- **Proposed Revisions to the Constitution**
- **New Business**

The General Membership Meeting is the legislative body of the AFO. Make your voice heard by attending this important meeting! Contact an Executive Board member if you would like to see something added to the agenda.

When and Where Does the AFO Conduct Its Most Important business?

At our General Membership Meetings which are held twice a year—once in the fall and again in the winter.

Who Needs to be There?

You do. These meetings are used to nominate officers and discuss and pass motions related to budgets, contractual enforcement and planning, and other important issues. The more of us who attend these meetings, the stronger we will be; the stronger we are, the more we can do.

What's the Best Meeting Time?

Scheduling a membership meeting is a little like herding cats. Try as you might, it is impossible to get everyone in the room at the same time.

While there is no “good time” to have a membership meeting, there are a lot of “bad times.” The AFO, almost from its inception, has held membership meetings on Friday afternoons. Friday afternoons are NOT the best time for anybody but, like Sunday afternoons, it is one of the few times that can be made to work for almost everybody.

Do you have any ideas? Contact any executive board member.

So, What Can You Do if Friday Afternoons Simply Won't Work?

Any ideas you have here are welcome as well. Should we use “Go-to-meeting” type software to allow remote access? Should we record meetings? Other ideas?

In the mean time, the best thing to do is read the agenda, contact an executive board member regarding issues of particular importance to you, and send in your proxy vote.

“Ten Years After” The AFO's Ten-Year Anniversary Celebration

**SAVE THE DATE: MAY 10, 2019
DETAILS BY MARCH
MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Do you want to help? Join the social committee by emailing afo@hfcc.edu

10 Year-Old Constitution Needs Updating

A review of the AFO Constitution that began in the fall will likely result in the Executive Board proposing a major revision to our Local's governing document. Our Constitution was originally drafted in 2008 by a "committee of one" - Joe Sorokac. Joe was one of our founding members and his memory was honored by the scholarships awarded in his name.

During the first few years, the Constitution was tweaked several times, but it hasn't changed since it was last amended during the Winter 2014 General Membership Meeting.

The Executive Board review is seen as an opportunity to correct any problems and to clarify any ambiguities. We also see it as a good time to make a few technical changes such as changing our name from the "Henry Ford Community College Adjunct Faculty Organization" to the "Henry Ford College Adjunct Faculty Organization."

A copy of the proposed revised AFO Constitution will be posted on our Web Page prior to our March 22 General Membership Meeting.

It takes two General Membership meetings to amend our Constitution. During the March 22 meeting, members will be provided with an overview of the proposed revisions and an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the merits of the proposed changes. At the end of the day, the membership may accept the proposed revisions, reject the revisions, or make changes to the proposed new language.

From there, the membership will decide whether the revisions should be approved by a referendum of all members or by a voice vote of all members present at (or who send proxies to) the Fall (2019) General Membership Meeting.

Whether approved by referendum or by voice vote, the changes (if accepted by the membership) will go into affect after our Fall 2019 General Membership Meeting.

Membership, "Fair Share" Fees, and Free-Riders Explained

Until relatively recently, the AFO collected "agency fees" from adjuncts who chose not to be members of the union.

Michigan's right-to-work-for-less law and last year's Janus Supreme Court decision changed all of that. The good news is that our treasurer no longer has to go through the process of distinguishing between "chargeable" and "non-chargeable" expenses.

Agency fees were determined by distinguishing these two types of expenses. Costs related to negotiating and enforcing our contract were considered "chargeable" to both members and non-members. Other expenses such as the contribution we made to the millage-renewal campaign were considered non-chargeable and could not be passed on to fee payers.

Creating an annual chargeable/non-chargeable report was a labor-intensive process and we're glad to no longer have to do it.

The bad news is that adjuncts can now choose to be "free riders." A "free rider," of course, is someone who takes advantage of our union contract without helping to pay for it.



So, what do you do, if you are someone who sees the value of our contract, but for some philosophical (or political) reason you do not want to become a member?

That's where "fair share" fees come in. Under a recent agreement with the College, new hires and current employees have three choices: (1) membership – which means that you have a voice in shaping and approving our contract; (2) free-riding; or (3) paying voluntary "fair share" fees. Fair share fees are set at two-thirds of membership dues. Currently dues payments for members are 2.05 percent and voluntary "fair share" fees are 1.4 percent..

Our future as an organization is dependent on the strength of our organizing efforts. We need to convince every new-hire and the most senior of senior adjuncts that it is in her or his best interest to choose membership. Membership gives you a voice in our decision-making process and means that you will have the opportunity to help shape our next contract.

★

Discovering Discounts

Check out the values online at our all new website at unionplus.org/aftbenefits

*Certain restrictions, limitations, and qualifications apply to these grants. Additional information and eligibility criteria can be obtained at UnionPlus.org/Assistance. Credit approval required. Terms and conditions apply. The Union Plus Credit Cards are issued by Capital One, N.A., pursuant to a license from Mastercard International Incorporated. Capital One N.A. is not responsible for the contents of this message and/or any other third party products/services mentioned. The Mastercard Brand Mark is a registered trademark of Mastercard International Incorporated.

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HFCC-AFO.org

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Help us build a
strong AFO and a
better College!



Key Dates

**March 22—General
Membership Meet-
ing**

**May 10—"Ten
Years After" - Cele-
brating the tenth
anniversary of our
first contract**

**November 3,
2020—Election
Day**

And Last, but Not Least ... President's Message



As you can see, this edition of our newsletter featured the background and history of the Adjunct Faculty Organization (AFO), Local 337, Henry Ford College. I hope you will mark your calendars and save time to celebrate our 10-year anniversary this coming May 10, 2019.

Looking around, I want to present a vision for the future, based on many things I have heard from adjuncts at Henry Ford College (HFC) and ideas from unions around the nation. This vision includes:

- Parity in pay with full-timers. We deserve this, based on our commitment and dedication to our students' success.
- Ability to achieve full-time status. We want HFC to seriously look within our ranks before looking outside for instructors to fill full-time positions.
- Increase in Professional Development funding. Along with conference registration costs, we need travel/lodging reimbursement.
- Benefits: We need access to employer-sponsored affordable health care and flexible spending accounts for childcare and medical expenses.
- Repeal of "Right to Work" and other legislation that restricts union growth and collective bargaining ability.
- Grow our student body. As our student body grows, so do our class offerings.

Our short term goals for 2019 are:

- Complete evaluation of the pilot class assignment process.
- Revise the AFO Constitution.
- Overhaul the AFO Home Page.
- Enforce the Collective Bargaining Agreement (see hfcc-afo.org) for the entire agreement.
- Include probationary Adjuncts in governance by allowing them to receive reimbursement for participating in School and department meetings and walk-on committees.
- Celebrate our unity and ability to stand together as a driving force at HFC.