



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

Adjunct Faculty Organization News

HFCC-AFO
AFT Local 337
AFT, AFL-CIO
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Indemnity Plans May Prove Beneficial to Under-Insured and Uninsured Adjuncts

By Bill Norris
AFO Executive Director and Recording Secretary

July 1, 2012 is the target date for implementation of a “voluntary group indemnity health insurance program” according to a “Letter of Agreement” between the AFO and the College. A separate letter specifies that July 1 is also the target date for implementation of a “voluntary Dental Insurance program.” We will miss those target dates, but not by much. We hope to conduct an “open enrollment” beginning in April in time for both programs to have an effective date of September 1, 2012.

The dental insurance program is a “traditional” insurance program which makes it easier to understand. Therefore I will save discussion of it for a separate, much shorter, article. There are, however, fundamental differences between “traditional” health insurance and the indemnity plan we are planning on implementing. It is critical, therefore, that senior adjuncts eligible for the program understand those differences before making a decision to enroll.

“Traditional” health insurance plans take many forms including “health maintenance organizations” and “preferred provider organizations.” With such plans, the insured

There are, however, fundamental differences between “traditional” health insurance and the indemnity plan we are planning on implementing. It is critical, therefore, that senior adjuncts eligible for the program understand those differences before making a decision to enroll.

is usually responsible for “deductibles” and/or “co-pays,” after which the plan pays 100% of the cost of services up to a plan “maximum,” which is usually one million dollars or more.

For example, my family is covered by my wife’s Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO Policy. We are responsible for paying a co-pay of \$15 whenever we go to an in-network doctor, and we are responsible for a deductible if one of us is hospitalized, requires an MRI or receives some other specialized service such as outpatient surgery. However, after we satisfy the deductible, BCBS covers all of our expenses. Our deductible is \$200 per person or \$400 for the whole family per year. My wife’s plan also covers prescription drugs—we have a co-pay of \$20 for name brand drugs and \$10 for generic drugs and the plan covers the balance—whether it’s a few dollars or several hundred dollars as is the case with one of the medicines our family relies on.

Thanks to my wife’s insurance policy which is paid for by her own pre-tax deductions from her paycheck and by pre-tax contributions made by her employer, our family is not particularly concerned about the risk of personal bankruptcy triggered by a catastrophic medical situation.

We know we’re among the fortunate 85% or so of Americans who

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Winter 2012 General Membership Meeting
Friday, March 23 @ 3:30 p.m. in L-311
(On the 3rd floor of the Reuther Liberal Arts Building)
See page three for full agenda

Changing of the Guard Marks End of an ERA

By Mary Beck
AFO President

In September, Bill Breger, one of the AFO's founding fathers, stepped down from his role as AFO Treasurer. More recently, two other AFO founding fathers, Glenn O'Kray and Bill Norris, and one of our founding mothers, Sherry Morgan, made personal decisions that will impact how the AFO does its business in the future.

Sherry, who succeeded Bill Breger as the AFO's Treasurer, and Glenn, the AFO's first and only Vice President, have announced that they will be stepping down from their positions when their terms expire next November. Bill Norris will complete his term as the AFO's Recording Secretary, but told us that he does not plan to renew his "personal services agreement" with the AFO past December and will retire from his position as the AFO's Executive

Director.

I am happy for each of them as they turn to the next chapters in their lives, but their decisions emphasize the need to have a strong bench. They will be sorely missed, but the AFO is fortunate to have a succession plan (see article on opposite page) that we believe will serve us well as we continue to work together to build a strong AFO and a better College.

Glenn O'Kray Believes AFO Is in Good Hands

When Glenn O'Kray told me and the rest of the Executive Board that he planned on stepping down from his position as the AFO's Vice President, he said, "What I'm going to miss the most is the collegiality of this group. But, I think it's the right time and I feel confident that the AFO will be stronger than ever in the years to come because we've got a great leadership team supported by a united membership."



Glenn served as the College's Director of Financial Aid for 30 years before retiring and returning to the classroom to teach "College Success" courses as an adjunct in 2004. He was one of the most active and influential members of our original organizing committee. People listened to him because of his history with the College and his reputation for offering sage advice. Given his involvement with politics, his experience as a past president and founding father of Local 71 (the union that represents College administrators), and his commitment to the goals of the AFO, Glenn was a natural choice to become our first Vice President.

He has served the AFO well but deserves to take extra time to travel and to visit his daughters in Florida and Arizona. We know that

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The Adjunct Faculty Organization News is the official newsletter of:

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Technology Building**

AFO Executive Board

- **Mary Beck, President**
- **L. Glenn O'Kray, Vice-President**
- **Thomas Anderson, Chief Grievance Officer**
- **Sherry Morgan, Treasurer**
- **William Norris, Recording Secretary and Executive Director**

You can contact any Executive Board member by office telephone, email, or by sending a letter through either interoffice or U.S. mail. See contact information above.

The AFO Executive Board has an open meeting policy. Between September and May, the Executive Board meets on the first Friday of the month at 2:00 p.m., usually in the Local 1650 Conference Room.

Succession Plan Proposal On Agenda for Winter General Membership Meeting

By the AFO Executive Board

All General Membership Meetings are important, but this winter's meeting is especially important. You need to make an extra effort to attend our once-a-semester meeting on the fourth Friday in March (see the box for the meeting agenda and details).

It is important that you think of the AFO as "our union" rather than "the union." By participating in membership meetings and volunteering for committees and answering our calls for action, you are helping us build a strong AFO. Your presence at this winter's meeting will help make the AFO a union that reflects the will and wishes of the membership, not just the ideas of the "leaders." The AFO needs you to step up if we are to have realistic hopes of matching or even surpassing the success we've enjoyed thus far.

We need to build a bench of capable individuals who can take over the reins of leadership as those of us currently serving step down or reduce our roles. The departures of Bill Breger, Sherry Morgan and Glenn O'Kray and the changed role for Bill Norris (see page two article by Mary Beck) means that a discussion of our "succession plan" is critically needed before we can finalize our budget for the coming fiscal year.

While a discussion of our succession plan is essential, it isn't the only important business that we will have before us on March 23. We will begin the meeting with a quick review of the status of various new programs mandated by our second contract—the adjunct performance evaluation and new hire mentor program; compensation for participation in standing committees of the College Organization; and the new indemnity health insurance

and traditional dental insurance plans that will be offered to senior adjuncts effective September 1 (see front page article). Each of these programs has the potential to improve our working conditions and we will need to take time to make sure all of your questions are answered.

We also need to re-elect the Elections Committee and elect a slate of delegates to both the 2012 AFT National Convention (which will conveniently be held in Detroit this July) and the 2012 AFT-Michigan Convention (which will be held in May).

Another important piece of business on the agenda will be nominations for two Vice Presidents and a Treasurer who will serve two-year terms beginning December 1, 2012.

AFO Will Need Its Third Treasurer

When Sherry announced her intention not to run for a full term as Treasurer, it became imperative to find a replacement. While any member in good standing is eligible to run for the Treasurer's position, not everyone is equally capable of doing the required work. It

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Winter 2012 General Membership Meeting Friday, March 23 @ 3:30 p.m. in L-311 (On the 3rd floor of the Reuther Liberal Arts Building)

Agenda

- **Welcome**
- **Status of new contract programs/letters of agreement**
- **2012-13 Elections Committee**
- **2012 AFT National Convention**
 - **Election of delegates**
- **2012 AFT-M State Convention**
 - **Election of delegates**
- **Current Year Fiscal Review**
- **Succession Plan Discussion**
- **2012-13 FY Proposed Budget**
 - **Discussion**
 - **Motion for approval**
- **Nominations for Vice Presidents and Treasurer**
- **New Business**

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

Agency fee payers (individuals covered by the AFO contract, but who are not AFO members) are welcome and encouraged to attend the meeting but may not cast votes regarding bargaining priorities, officer elections or other matters.

Light snack provided. Children welcome!

Founding Mother and Fathers Moving On

(Continued from page 2)

he will continue to be an active member of the AFO and will be there to offer his suggestions and support in return for a “best life story” because he says he plans to continue to teach his College Success course “indefinitely.”

Sherry Morgan Ready to Turn the Page

Sherry Morgan was always there.



Whether it was staying late to try to get another card signed during our fall 2008 organizing drive or designing and systemizing our membership

database after we received our first “HR report,” Sherry Morgan has always been there. It’s not that I or other Executive Board members ever took her for granted, but we always knew that Sherry could be counted on to do what needed to be done.

I wasn’t completely surprised when Sherry advised me and the rest of the Executive Board that she plans on joining her husband Henry (who served the College for many years as the director of the graphics center) in retirement, but that didn’t stop me from thinking: “How are we ever going to replace her?”

During our first year and half of operations, Sherry served as our Financial Records Secretary. Her work may not have been as visible to the membership as the work I get to do, but it has been every bit as important. In fact, more important: the AFO would get along just fine without me, but we couldn’t operate without her.

She and Henry plan on doing some travelling in the coming years

and will spend more time with their grandchildren, but she promises that she will only be “a phone call away.”

Bill Norris to “Retire,” but Won’t Go Away Entirely

We’re still trying to talk him out of it, but Bill Norris has advised us that he plans to step down from his role as the organization’s Executive Director. While Bill insists that he will indeed resign (we’re still in denial), he has at least given us plenty of advance notice—he has agreed to continue in the role until the end of the fall 2012 semester. That gives us nearly a year to replace somebody who has characterized himself as the AFO’s chief cook and bottle washer and who I would characterize as pretty damn near irreplaceable.

In addition to being the AFO’s Executive Director (a paid staff position), Bill also serves as the AFO’s Recording Secretary and is a member of our Executive Board. Bill plans on taking a leave of absence both from the classroom and the AFO during the winter 2013 semester, but will return by the fall 2013 semester to complete his term as Recording Secretary.

Bill said “I’ll teach less, but I haven’t ruled out running for another term as Recording Secretary when my current term expires



(November 30, 2013). We will be back at the bargaining table in the Spring and Summer of 2014 and I think I could contribute to one more round of contract talks.”

Speaking for myself, Tom Anderson, the rest of the Executive Board and I believe for most of the membership: I hope Bill is back at the table in 2014 and at whatever negotiations take place after that. Bill has been a key member of our first two bargaining committees and almost everybody who knows him agrees that he has been the heart and soul of the AFO.

The two Bills, Sherry and Glenn have helped make the AFO the strong organization it is today. The bad news is that we are losing, at least in part, a total of four key contributors in a relatively short period. The good news is that even though we can’t have them in the roles we’ve become accustomed to, we’ll at least still benefit from their continued involvement and their decisions will create opportunities for other members to step up to the plate.

As Bill Norris told me, “there is a tremendous amount of talent in the AFO. We just have to keep quiet about how much work it is and make it look like fun. Somebody good will want to step up when we step down.”

Thank Bill, Sherry and Glenn for their service to the AFO, and the College, when you see them about campus.

As Bill Norris told me, “There is a tremendous amount of talent in the AFO. We just have to keep quiet about how much work it is and make it look like fun. Somebody good will want to step up when we step down.”

Succession Plan Decisions Will Drive FY 2012-13 Budget

(Continued from page 3)

requires a specific skill set and takes a great deal of training to learn all of the ins and outs of the job.

Luckily, we are fortunate enough to have a candidate in the wings who is willing and able to do the job. During our February Executive Board meeting, the Board concurred with Mary Beck's decision to appoint Cedric Knott to the position of Financial Records Secretary. This position is the one that Sherry vacated (and that we left open) when Sherry stepped up to complete Bill Breger's term as Treasurer when he stepped down last September.

By serving as Financial Records Secretary between now and next December, Cedric, who is very close to earning his Ph.D. in Finance, will be ready to assume responsibilities for the position if he is elected during the fall 2012 General Membership Meeting.

It Will Take Two People to Replace Glenn O'Kray

Glenn O'Kray's decision to not run for a new term as Vice President left another hole. We've decided that we'll need two vice presidents to replace Glenn. The constitution, as amended last fall, gives the President with the approval of the rest of the Executive Board the authority to break up and merge certain positions, so we have decided to ask the membership to fill two Vice President positions—a "Vice President for Internal Issues" who will be primarily responsible for working with HFCC administrators on issues related to the enforcement of the contract and a "Vice President for External Issues" who will be primarily responsible for coordinating "political action and education."

Bill Norris has vowed to nominate Tom Anderson ("if no one beats me to it") to be elected to a two-year term as Vice President for Internal Issues. As Bill pointed out, "Tom is an ideal candidate for this position—it is no accident that it dovetails so perfectly with what he has been doing as the AFO's Chief Grievance Officer."

English Adjunct Nancy Owen Nelson, a retired full-time employee of the College, has expressed a willingness and interest in running for the Vice President for External Issues position. Given her knowledge of the College and the community and her political activism, Nancy will make an ideal candidate for this position.

The fact that Tom, Cedric and Nancy have stepped forward should not inhibit other members in good standing from throwing their hats in the ring. Individual adjuncts can submit their name for nomination for any one of these positions from the floor of the General Membership Meeting either by contacting Bill Norris as the AFO's Recording Secretary in advance or simply showing up and saying so on the day of this most important general membership meeting—Friday, March 23.

It Will Also Take Two to Replace Bill Norris

Another important piece of business to be considered during this March meeting involves next year's budget and replacing Bill Norris as the AFO Executive Director. Treasurer Sherry Morgan will discuss our proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year and our financial performance thus far this year.

As is typical for unions like ours, two types of expenses—per capita payments to affiliated organizations and payroll expenses—account for the lion's share—88%—of all of our expenses. The payroll expenses reflect the Executive Director's salary and officer stipends. This year, we budget-

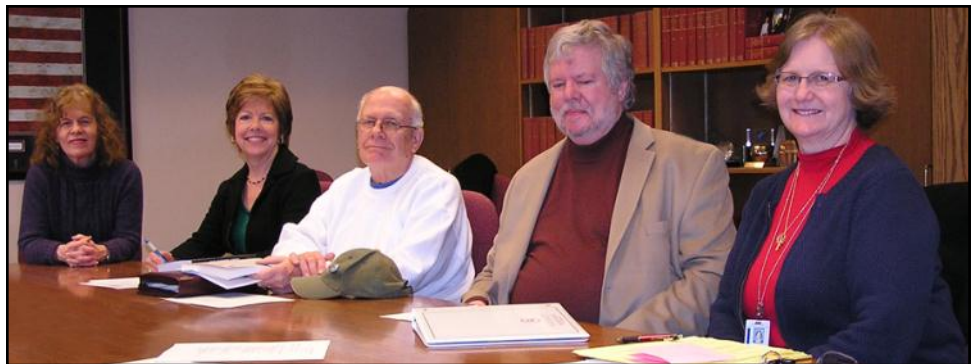
ed \$40,800 for Bill Norris's salary (including insurances and payroll taxes) and \$18,200 for officer stipends. We will come in pretty close on Bill's salary and a little under on officer stipends, but as you can see, the cost of our "staff" is one of our single biggest expenses.

In comparison to the payroll expenses of other local unions like ours—Wayne State University's Union of Part-Time Faculty; the University of Michigan's Lecturer Employee Organization; and Western Michigan University's Professional Instructors Organization—our payroll expenses have been well below the median.

That's because of the arrangement we have with our "staff" which consists mostly of Bill Norris; a status quo that has existed in one way or another for over three years. Immediately after the AFO won its recognition election in May, 2008, Bill was hired by AFT-Michigan to work as a "contract campaign organizer" and was assigned to serve the AFO in that capacity during our first contract campaign. When our first contract went into effect in July, 2009, Bill resigned from AFT-Michigan and accepted a paid position with the AFO as a "Staff Organizer." We later changed his title to "Executive Director" to better reflect his actual duties.

The arrangements we have with Bill as our Executive Director were first articulated in a "personal services agreement" signed in July, 2009 and which has been renewed.

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Nancy Owen Nelson attended the February 3 Executive Board meeting to participate in the discussion of the succession plan. Pictured from left to right are Nancy, Mary Beck, Glenn O'Kray, Tom Anderson, and Sherry Morgan. Bill Norris took the photograph. The Executive Board has an open meeting policy—all adjuncts are welcome to attend.

AFO Succession Plan Is Key Agenda Item

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The original PSA we signed with Bill set his salary at 80% of the “market rate.” The “market rate” was the average rate paid at the time by AFT local unions in the state to their “Staff Organizer” (or similar title). Bill agreed to this arrangement because he was also serving as the AFO’s elected Recording Secretary and a member of the Executive Board. He insisted that he would work full-time (he certainly has), but would consider 20% of his time voluntary. The same basic arrangement will continue in place until Bill retires from the role at the end of December 2012 when his last personal services agreement with the AFO will expire.

Mary Beck (as President) with the approval of the rest of the Executive Board has the authority based on our constitution to enter into personal service agreements with “staff.” If the membership approves our proposed budget, we plan to continue to use, and even expand, the model Bill helped create. Rather than hiring an “objective outsider,” this model prefers to fill staff positions by tying them to elected positions. The recommendation is that we create two new half-time positions; one to be filled by the President and a second position to be filled by the Vice President for Internal Issues.

After discussing the proposal within the Executive Board, we brought it to the Finance Committee for further discussion. In the final analysis, we reached consensus that it makes sense to propose a budget for FY 2012-13 that includes a provision to enter into two personal service agreements in January 2013 that will be tied to Tom and Mary’s elected offices. One PSA would be for a half-time Executive Director which will be filled by the Vice President for Internal Issues and the second PSA would be for a half-time Staff Mobilizer position which will be filled by the President.

The contracts will require that each position spend ten to fifteen hours per week at the office so that the office is open a minimum of 20 hours per week (as Bill Norris has been required to do). The half time Executive Director would be primarily responsible for

Bill’s administrative duties ranging from managing meetings by scheduling them, setting the agenda, and taking minutes to supporting the treasurer with monthly, periodic, and annual financial processes. The Staff Mobilizer would be responsible for internal and external communications and for the ongoing organizing and as-necessary mobilization of the membership. The Staff Mobilizer will also represent the AFO on various College committees and forums and will be the AFO’s lead representative on the Task Force that oversees the Adjunct Performance Evaluation and New Hire Mentor Program.

Treasurer Sherry Morgan and the Finance Committee have understood for some time that expenses will go up in the future relative to income for two reasons. First, we have been benefiting from a temporary reduction in the amount of per capita payments we pay to the American Federation of Teachers. That reduction will expire at the end of the next fiscal year (July 2014) which means that our per capita expenses will go up by about \$10,000 in the following fiscal year.

Second, we’ve been aware that our payroll expenses are below “market rates” and we expected them to rise when Bill Norris retired. This fiscal year, our budgeted payroll expenses were \$59,000. If this proposal is approved as is, we will need to budget approximately \$63,500 in payroll expenses next year and \$67,000 in the following year (because the \$8,000 annual increase will only affect half the year in FY 2012-13).

Since the Finance Committee and Executive Board have taken these anticipated increases in expenses into

account in the past, our current dues and fees structure can withstand the blow of \$18,000 of increased expenses for per capita payments and payroll expenses without requiring any corresponding increase in our revenues unless we are doubly impacted by a significant reduction in enrollment (and a corresponding reduction in the number of adjuncts).

The Finance Committee predicts that an \$18,000 increase in expenses would greatly reduce our annual “operating surplus” without completely wiping it out. Since the AFO has sufficient financial reserves now to cover both unanticipated expenses (such as legal fees because of a series of arbitrations) and large periodic expenses (e.g. an outside audit at the end of each five-year period), the Executive Board and the Finance Committee agree that it is fiscally prudent to enter into these two personal services agreements because they are in the best interests of the organization—especially if they are tied to the elected offices giving the membership the option of voting them out of office and out of a job.

Sherry and the Finance Committee are proposing a final budget based on the assumption that the membership will support this succession plan. The proposed budget will be posted on our website by February 23. Sherry says it can be modified “on the fly” if necessary during the general membership meeting if any changes are warranted.

That’s a lot of business to conduct in one General Membership Meeting, but it needs to be done, and we need you there to help make sure it is done right.



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Michigan Politics Not Getting Any Prettier

By Bill Norris
AFO Executive Director and Recording Secretary

It seems that a discussion of Michigan politics has become a regular feature of *The AFO News*. VP Glenn O'Kray has told you more than once that the AFO has more problems in Lansing than in Dearborn. President Mary Beck published an editorial in our most recent newsletter to explain why so-called "Right to Work" laws are wrong for Michigan.

Now it's my turn to try to convince independent-minded adjuncts to vote for Democratic candidates for state offices in November. You should vote for Democrats because they are far more likely than Republicans to support legislation that is in our economic best interest.

Politics can be personal so I'm going to tell you a little something about my personal politics. I grew up in a working class family in Detroit and my parents generally supported Democrats and always supported the collective bargaining rights of workers. My mom was a union member (she was a school secretary in Detroit), but my dad didn't enjoy the benefits of a union contract. He was smart enough, however, to realize that he would have been better off if he was protected by a union and to know that he benefitted indirectly from the fact that in the 1950s Detroit was a "union town."

You can call me a liberal if you want even though the Republican spin machine has made that a dirty word. I believe that government can do some things, such as providing police and fire protection, roads, and education, better than the private sector. Hell, I will even freely admit that I think Saul Alinsky had a lot of good ideas.

As Will Rogers once said, I'm not a member of an organized political party, I'm a Democrat. But that doesn't mean I've blindly supported Democrats in every election. I consider the issues and the best interests of myself, my family, and, yes, my class.

I've voted for Republicans in the past. For instance, as a Vietnam veteran, I was a fan of a moderate John McCain and supported his candidacy

in 2000 when he was competing with George W. Bush for the Republican nomination.

I think McCain missed a golden opportunity in 2004 to run for vice president on the Democratic ticket (with a fellow Vietnam veteran). I believe that if he had, the success of a Kerry-McCain ticket would have blunted the bitter partisanship which characterizes American politics in the early 21st century. Instead, however, he sold his soul to the devil and catered to the crazy right wing of the Republican party so that he could run a losing campaign for the presidency in 2008.

I'm not sure what's in that tea that so many Americans have been drinking, but there is no doubt in my mind that it has clouded their judgment. Far too many working people oppose Obama because they think he's raised their taxes when in fact he's cut them. The idea of working people supporting a party that will fight to the death to prevent a tax break for the top 1% from expiring while being more than ready to allow a minimal reduction in payroll taxes that benefits middle class workers to expire just doesn't make sense to me.

With its drift to the far right, Republicans are placing all of their bets on the failed trickle-down policies of the past.

When then Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney invented Obamacare, as Republicans derisively refer to the flawed Affordable Health Care Act, he was nearly as progressive a Republican as his dad was. But just as John McCain had done, he's sold his soul to the evil right wing of the Republican party to secure his party's nomination. (By the way, "Obamacare" is flawed because it didn't go far enough—what we really need is a single payer system. A single payer system can control health care costs by stripping away the administrative layers of big insurance. Such a system would free businesses from the burden of exorbitant health care costs while simultaneously finally providing universal coverage to American families.)

However, even though Mitt has embraced the right wing, it doesn't really



State Representative George Darany met with AFO members during our fall, 2011 meeting and described the bitter partisan rancor that characterizes Michigan politics. Darany didn't quite say so, but the basic message was that Republicans in the state house and senate are out to privatize public schools and want to kill the AFO and other public employee unions.

matter that much to us who is elected president. Sure, Obama would be a better president, but he can't do that much to help us and Mitt can't do that much to hurt us.

Our focus needs to be on state politics, especially the state house of representatives where we need to win ten seats to overturn Republican domination of the entire state government. We've seen what's happened in Wisconsin and Indiana and if the tea party Republicans in the state legislature have their way, we will have the same results here in Michigan.

We've worked too hard to build a strong AFO and a better College to allow Republicans to pull the rug out from under us without a fight.

Vote your economic interests this November, write your legislators, and find some time to contribute to AFT's get-out-the-vote drive. If you can afford it, make a contribution to the AFT-M political action fund. It's going to take a lot of money to turn the tide.

Organized labor in Michigan has been discussing what it would take to get a constitutional amendment on the November ballot to protect our collective bargaining rights. I hope our union leaders decide to go that route even though it will cost a lot in terms of hard cash and time to win that fight. It may be the only hope we have of keeping the AFO alive.

Dental Plans Will Give Some Adjuncts a Reason to Smile

Few American families have been forced to file for bankruptcy as a result of catastrophic dental expenses, but that doesn't mean dental insurance isn't important. Anyone who has suffered a toothache knows how important good dental hygiene and regular dental care is. Accordingly, the AFO is pleased to be able to offer Senior Adjuncts the opportunity to enroll in the Associated Mutual Voluntary Dental Program being offered through the Public Employees' Trust.

Senior Adjuncts who elect this coverage for themselves and/or their dependents may receive care through either a participating provider or any other licensed provider. If covered individuals receive care from an in-network provider, the provider will accept the plan's payment and will bill the patient for any balance (other than the co-pay amount). If covered individuals go outside of the network, the plan will pay the "maximum allowable cost" that would have been paid to an in-network provider. By structuring the plan in this way, we were able to negotiate a discounted rate and still allow members to choose an out-of-network dentist.

The plan provides three levels of coverage for three levels of benefits. Class I benefits includes diagnostic and preventive services such as exams, cleanings, fluoride treatments, and bitewing radiographs. Class II benefits are covered at 100 percent. Class III benefits, including fillings, oral surgery, palliative treatments, endodontic services, periodontal services, and radiographs other than bitewings, are covered at 60 percent. Finally, Class III benefits, which include major restorative services such as crowns, bridges, and dentures, are covered at 40 percent. Plan benefits are subject to a \$1,000 per year annual maximum benefit per person.

Senior Adjuncts interested in enrolling in the Dental Program will have an opportunity to do so during the open enrollment period which will begin in April. The plan will be structured very much like the Medical Indemnity Plan—premiums will be deducted from the nine paychecks received during the fall and winter semester before income taxes. However, just as the case is with medical indemnity plan premiums, deductions will be taken for social security

Dental Plan Premiums ¹	Annual	Monthly	Per check
Employee	\$381.12	\$31.76	\$42.34
Employee plus Spouse	\$728.04	\$60.67	\$80.90
Employee plus Child(ren)	\$729.84	\$60.82	\$81.09
Family	\$1,076.52	\$89.71	\$119.62
Spouse Only	\$381.12	\$31.76	\$42.34
Spouse plus Child(ren) Only	\$729.84	\$60.82	\$81.09
Child(ren) Only	\$369.96	\$30.83	\$41.10

¹Plan premiums are shown in terms of annual cost; the monthly cost if paid in 12 installments (not an option but useful for comparison shopping purposes); and the per check cost—the amount that will be deducted pretax from the nine checks received between September 22 and May 22. If there is any discrepancy between the rates shown in this table and those shown on enrollment forms, the rates on the enrollment forms govern.

and Medicare taxes.

The same seven levels of coverage associated with the medical indemnity plans are available. See the rate table above for cost information.

Employees are not required to choose a medical indemnity plan to enroll in the dental plan and they are

not required to enroll in the dental plan if they choose to enroll in a medical indemnity plan. However, if they do elect a medical indemnity plan and also choose dental coverage, they are required to elect the same level of employee/family coverage in both plans.

What about Probationary Adjuncts and Domestic Partners?

We know that it isn't just heterosexual senior adjuncts who need health insurance. Probationary adjuncts who lack coverage are equally at risk of financial calamity as are their sisters and brothers who have eight or more semesters under their belt. And adjuncts, probationary or senior, who belong to the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) community often have domestic partners they love who need health insurance.

Unfortunately, for legal reasons, the College is unable to permit us to offer benefits to the domestic partners of LGBT employees. It isn't legal reasons, but practical ones, that prevent us from extending our plans to probationary employees. Our partners are unwilling to assume the financial risk until after employees have an established track record of employment with the College.

While there are fewer options for probationary employees and the partners of LGBT employees, there are some alternatives to just hoping you don't have a medical catastrophe

As an AFT member, you can enroll in an AFT-sponsored medical indemnity plan similar to the ones we are offering. While the AFT plans are somewhat more expensive and must be paid for with after-tax dollars, they may bridge the gap for some. Visit <http://www.aft.org/benefits/>—the AFT website—to learn more about benefits available to you as an AFT member.

Another option may be one of the traditional plans brokered by Red A (see the article "About our partners" on the opposite page). Like AFT benefits, they must be paid for with after-tax dollars, but they might provide at least a temporary solution to your health care needs.

Indemnity Plan May Be the Answer

(Continued from page 1)

have adequate health insurance either through a self-paid plan, a government-sponsored plan (such as Medicare) or an employer-sponsored plan (such as my wife's). Not all adjuncts are so fortunate.

Surveys conducted by the AFO indicate that approximately 15% of HFCC adjuncts do not have the peace of mind my wife and I enjoy because they are among the 50 million Americans who lack health insurance. Perhaps another 15% of adjuncts are losing sleep because they are under-insured. Going back to our days as an organizing committee, the AFO has always had a goal of addressing the issue of uninsured and under-insured adjuncts.

We hope the Affordable Health Care Act is left largely in place when the Supreme Court considers the constitutional issues, but we are not confident that that will be the case. The Court may gut the program and even if it doesn't, most provisions of the health care act won't go into effect until 2014. While we believe that the ultimate solution to the problem of under-insured and uninsured Americans lies with the federal government, not individual employers and employee unions, we accept it as our responsibility to do what we can in the meantime to find a workable solution for those of us who lack adequate health care insurance.

We are fortunate to have Tom Anderson, our Chief Grievance Officer and the lead negotiator in our two rounds of contract negotiations, as a member of the AFO. Tom is also a member of Wayne State University's Union of Part-time Faculty. In his role as that union's grievance officer and lead negotiator, Tom held meetings with a number of insurance companies that provide traditional health insurance plans (HMOs and PPOs) to employer groups. Once the AFO was recognized (in May 2008), we began to participate in the meetings. We quickly discovered that traditional insurance companies were reluctant to do business with "non-traditional" employee groups such as the AFO and the UPTF.

We're a non-traditional employee group because we are a union of part-

time employees and because there is little realistic possibility that we could ever get the College to agree to provide us with a health insurance plan paid for in large part through employer (College) contributions. MEBS—a third party administrator with close ties to labor unions—was the only insurer that even considered offering a group plan to the UPTF, but the cost of the plan was so astronomically high that UPTF members, led by the uninsured members present, voted it down unanimously.

Since traditional insurance companies refused to do business with

groups like ours, Tom began to search for a non-traditional solution which ultimately led to our decision to offer "the HM Care Advantage Group Limited Indemnity Medical Insurance Plan."

Indemnity Plan Mechanics

In cooperation with the College and the health care provider (HM Insurance Company), we will be conducting an "open enrollment" commencing in April and continuing until July 31. During this period senior adjuncts who plan to work both the fall 2012 and winter 2013 semesters will be

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About our partners

The AFO Executive Board passed a motion to introduce the HM Care Advantage Limited Indemnity Insurance Plan and the Associated Mutual Voluntary Dental Program because members who completed our last survey (just before we began bargaining our second contract) said that we should. While a number of adjuncts, probably the majority according to our surveys, will not be personally interested because they already have good health and dental insurance, the plans may bridge the gap for uninsured and under-insured adjuncts. While we are the primary backers of the plans, we couldn't be offering them without the help of several significant partners.

Our first and most important partner is the College. While the plans will be paid for by employee contributions, the College is the "sponsor" of the plans and will be required to submit all required government filings related to the plans and will also be responsible for all of the accounting related to deducting plan payments from participating employee paychecks and for forwarding those payments to the carriers. The implementation of these plans is another indication of the fact that the College is a partner, not an adversary, in our goal of improving the learning conditions of HFCC students by improving the working conditions of HFCC adjuncts.

Our second key partner is Kim Nicholson, a consultant who represents Red "A" - an insurance agency that is majority owned by the AFL-CIO Public

Employee Trust. Besides brokering both the indemnity plan and the dental plans that we are offering, Red "A" has also gathered cost and benefit information on a range of traditional medical insurance plans that can be purchased individually, but with after-tax dollars, rather than pre-tax dollars. These individual plans have been available for some time and some adjuncts may prefer the traditional plans, despite their higher cost, to the indemnity plans being offered through payroll deduction. For more information, visit www.hfcc-afco.org and you will find a link on our Website to Red "A" Insurance.

Our third key partner is the HM Insurance Group. HM is offering us the HM Care Advantage Plan through a partnership with Key Benefit Administrators. KBA, located in Indianapolis, IN. and Fort Mill, SC, is a national leader in the administration of health and welfare benefits with more than 25 years of experience. Robert Evangelista, our HM Insurance Group representative, promises that KBA will administer the plan in a manner that is responsive to enrollees. He also promised to conduct meetings and field questions during the open enrollment period to make sure eligible adjuncts understand the value and limits of the three levels of indemnity plans being offered.

We are grateful to all of these key partners. Without their cooperation, we wouldn't be in a position to offer these plans.

Plan Premiums ¹	Plan 1			Plan 2			Plan 3		
	Annual	Monthly	Per check	Annual	Monthly	Per check	Annual	Monthly	Per check
Employee	\$814.32	\$67.86	\$90.48	\$1,714.08	\$142.84	\$190.45	\$2,829.36	\$235.78	\$314.37
Employee plus Spouse	\$1,510.44	\$125.87	\$167.82	\$3,265.32	\$272.11	\$362.82	\$5,439.72	\$453.31	\$604.41
Employee plus Child(ren)	\$1,523.16	\$126.93	\$169.24	\$3,278.04	\$273.17	\$364.23	\$5,452.44	\$454.37	\$605.82
Family	\$2,216.64	\$184.72	\$246.30	\$4,826.76	\$402.23	\$536.31	\$8,061.12	\$671.76	\$895.67
Spouse Only	\$814.32	\$67.86	\$90.48	\$1,714.08	\$142.84	\$190.45	\$2,829.36	\$235.78	\$314.37
Spouse plus Child(ren) Only	\$1,523.16	\$126.93	\$169.24	\$3,278.04	\$273.17	\$364.23	\$5,452.44	\$454.37	\$605.82
Child(ren) Only	\$831.84	\$69.32	\$92.42	\$1,686.72	\$140.56	\$187.41	\$2,746.08	\$228.84	\$305.12

¹Plan premiums are shown in terms of annual cost; the monthly cost if paid in 12 installments (not an option but useful for comparison shopping purposes); and the per check cost—the amount that will be deducted pretax from the nine checks received between September 22 and May 22. If there is any discrepancy between the rates shown in this table and those shown on enrollment forms, the rates on the enrollment forms govern.

Core Benefits (Partial List)	Plan 1	Plan 2	Plan 3
Daily In-Hospital	\$100 per day 30 Days	\$800 per day 30 Days	\$1,600 per day 30 days
Surgery	\$500 maximum	\$1,000 maximum	\$4,000 maximum
Anesthesia	\$100 One Surgery	\$200 One Surgery	\$800 One Surgery
Outpatient Diagnostic Testing	\$100 per Testing Day Two Days	\$250 per Testing Day Two Days	\$350 per Testing Day Two Days
Office Visits—Physician/LP	\$80 per Visit Two Visits	\$80 per Visit Two Visits	\$80 per Visit Four Visits
Hospital Emergency Room	\$400 per Visit	\$400 per Visit	\$500 per Visit
Ambulance Service	\$300 per Trip	\$300 per Trip	\$300 per Trip
Inpatient Visits—Physicians	No coverage	\$80 per Visit Four Visits	\$80 per Visit Four Visits
Outpatient Health Services	\$200 per Treatment Day	\$300 per Treatment Day	\$400 per Treatment Day
Wellness Screening Test	\$150 per Test	\$150 per Test	\$150 per Test
Wellness Service	\$75 per Service	\$75 per Service	\$75 per Service
Home Health Care	\$40 per Visit	\$50 per Visit	\$50 per Visit

An Indemnity Plan Is NOT Your Grandmother's Insurance Plan

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given an opportunity to enroll in one of three indemnity plans. The three plans vary in terms of cost and benefits. For example, Plan 1 will cost \$814.32 per year (the equivalent of \$67.86 per month) for employee-only coverage while Plan 2 will cost \$1,714.08 per year (\$142.84 per month) and Plan 3 will cost \$2,829.36 per year or the equivalent of \$235.78 per month. Obviously, the benefits for Plan 3 at \$235.78 per month for single coverage are going to be significantly better than the benefits for Plan 1 at only \$67.86 per month.

You will have noticed that I gave the cost of the plans for employee-only coverage in annual figures and their monthly equivalents. The plans will go into effect on September 1 and premiums will be deducted in equal installments from the nine paychecks received between September 22 (the first paycheck of the fall semester) and May 22 (the final paycheck of the winter semester). For Plan 1, the (nine) monthly payments for employee-only coverage will be \$90.48; for Plan 2 the deduction will be \$190.45; and for Plan 3 coverage, the employee would pay \$314.37 per month for nine months for a full year of coverage. If you enroll in one of the plans, you will be finished paying on May 22, but you will be covered until August 31—your next payment won't be deducted until September 22 of the next plan year.

The premiums will be deducted before income taxes (i.e. you will not have to pay income tax on the premiums), but health care premiums are subject to social security and Medicare taxes.

As shown in the chart on the opposite page, eligible adjuncts can choose any of seven coverage levels ranging from employee-only to children-only. The idea is to give eligible adjuncts as much flexibility as possible in choosing a plan based upon their individual situations.

For instance if you are married with children, it is possible that your children are covered by Michigan's MiChild program while you and your spouse lack coverage. In such circumstances,

you may be thinking about coverage for "employee and spouse." (Note: if you're children are not covered by MiChild, you should investigate if they are eligible before enrolling in our plan.)

Indemnity plans can bridge the gaps for individuals and families who do not have health insurance coverage as well as for those who have health care plans with high out-of-pocket costs. Plan 1 will be most attractive to eligible adjuncts who have health coverage with high deductibles and co-pays. Plans 2 and 3 will appeal more to eligible adjuncts who currently lack medical coverage.

An examination of the core benefits listed in the table on the opposite page will explain why. According to statistics provided to us by HM, the average cost of a day in a Michigan hospital is about \$1,800. Suppose you are charged for a five-day hospital stay and you have no insurance at all. You would be responsible for paying the \$8,000 average cost—a figure that would send a lot of us into bankruptcy. If you are covered by Plan 1, HM would pay you (or the hospital if you designate it that way) \$500—and you would still owe the hospital \$7,500. This balance (\$7,500) on a five-day hospital bill means that if you choose Plan 1 and do not have any alternate coverage, a five-day hospital stay might put you into bankruptcy.

However, look further down the list at the benefits provided by Plan 1—it would cover most of your out-of-

pocket costs for various services such as routine visits to a physician when you are sick (the plan would pay \$80 each for up to two visits per year); outpatient diagnostic tests such as a mammogram (the plan would pay \$100 per day for up to two days of testing); an emergency room visit (the plan would pay \$400 for one such visit); outpatient hospital services (the plan would pay \$200 for one day of outpatient treatment); and so on. So anyone covered by a plan with high deductibles and co-pays might be interested in signing up for Plan 1.

As the chart shows, Plan 2 provides an intermediate level of benefits (much better than the benefits provided by Plan 1, but not as comprehensive as the benefits of Plan 3). Plan 3, while much more costly, would keep most uninsured people out of bankruptcy because it provides the highest level of benefits—enough to cover the bulk of charges in all but the most catastrophic of medical situations.

All three plans provide many additional benefits to those listed in the chart such as a pharmacy discount card, provider network discounts, and a health information call line. More information will be provided both in print and in meetings both before and during the open enrollment period.

As AFO President Mary Beck said when the Executive Board was presented with the option of nixing the plan or going forward with it, "These

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GEEQ is a nonprofit organization that runs travel programs for educators. Get detailed info at www.geeo.org or call toll free 877/600-0105.

Summer 2012 destinations include: **China**, South Africa, Russia, Peru and India.

HFCC's Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation Reaches Out to Adjuncts

The mission of HFCC's Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation is to be a "center dedicated to teaching excellence and innovation designed to provide full-time and part-time faculty with resources for professional development and the improvement of student learning outcomes." Under the direction of Janice Caie-Lawrence, the Center has been doing just that.

Janice has been going out of her way to encourage adjuncts to take advantage of CTEI offerings and to make them welcome when they do. She will also be participating in and contributing to the development of our "New Hire Mentor Program."

One CTEI offering that is targeted at adjuncts is the "Adjunct 101" program. The program includes four modules: (1) Introduction to HFCC Basics—Course Planning (Course Masters and Syllabi), Web Advisor, UCompass, and GroupWise email; (2) Community College Students, Student Services, and Managing Class Dynamics; (3) Active Teaching and Learning Strategies; and (4) Assessment; Academic Integrity.

While new hires, especially those new to teaching, are strongly encouraged to attend the program, even seasoned veterans can learn a lot by signing up for the Adjunct 101 course. And thanks to Business and Economics Division Senior Adjunct Robin Adams, not having the time to take the on-campus, face-to-face course is no longer an obstacle. Robin developed an online version of the course which is now available through Ucompass. (You must register for the course through CTEI first.)

Taking the course, either on campus or online, will help faculty members acclimate to HFCC's culture and student body. The orientation will help you gain the tools needed to become actively involved in the College, both in and outside of the classroom.

Better still, the AFO contract provides payment of \$25 per hour for up to four hours of training provided

through the CTEI per year through our Professional Development Fund. If you've already "passed" adjunct 101 (and even if you haven't) consider taking advantage of one of the CTEI's many other events, including offerings such as an on-line instruction support group, a book club, UCompass open house Q&A, and many other events. Pay attention to Janice's emails for times and dates and registration information.



Indemnity Plans Can Bridge the Gap

(Continued from page 11)

indemnity plans are far from perfect and our members need to be fully aware that they are not the same as traditional health insurance. However, they do provide a mechanism that will keep most of our uninsured members out of dire financial straights if they choose to take the coverage. I'm pleased we can offer the plans through a provider we can trust at group rates that members can pay for with mostly pre-tax, rather than after-tax, dollars."

I agree fully with Mary's summary of the situation especially the notion that individual members considering the plans understand the difference between them and traditional health insurance.

As I've already noted, my wife and I enjoy considerable peace of mind when it comes to health care costs because we are covered by her BCBS plan. A little over a year ago, I had a bout of kidney stones and ended up having a procedure called a lithotripsy and, as a result of some complications, a five-day hospital stay. The total bill came to over \$17,000, but thanks to my wife's health insurance, we only had to pay \$200 of it. The rest was covered by BCBS.

If I lacked traditional health insurance, but had been covered by Plan 3, the plan would have paid \$9,600 for six hospital days (it pays an extra day for the first day of the hospital visit) plus \$500 for the emergency room (I came in through the emergen-

cy room) plus up to \$4,000 for the lithotripsy (it's considered surgery) and another \$800 for the anesthesia (I sure needed it) and \$80 each for the two times my doctor came to see me and ask how I felt (pretty awful at the time—it hurts to even think about it). Bottom line, I probably would have paid considerably more than \$200 in out-of-pocket expenses if I had Plan 3, but I wouldn't have gone broke either: Plan 3 would have covered most of my expenses.

The problem is that such an event would have eaten up a lion's share of my total benefits for the year. I would have been in serious trouble if I had a second such catastrophic event in the same year or if I suffered from some sort of chronic condition that required multiple hospital stays—perhaps exceeding the 30-day per year maximum.

If you or a family member currently lacks health insurance, you are certainly a candidate for Plan 2 or Plan 3 coverage. While relatively expensive, both plans, especially Plan 3, will cover most of the expenses that 99 percent of us can expect to incur in a given plan year.

You should compare the cost of these plans to individual plans—both traditional ones and other indemnity plans—before making a final decision. If you do such a cost comparison, we think you will find that there is value in all three plans. Depending on your individual circumstances, you may find that one or another of the plans is a bridge to your peace of mind.

Students Need More Counseling, Not Less

By Bill Norris

AFO Executive Director

A year ago a Senate Task Force on Counseling and Advising issued its “Final Report” which, among other things, recommended the addition of academic advisors as part of Student Services. The Senate of the College Organization convened the Task Force to investigate options that the College could pursue “to address [the] extremely long waits students [must] endure in the Counseling area.”

Anyone who has witnessed the chaotic scene in the Learning Resource Center at the beginning of a semester knows that it was a good idea to create the Task Force and attempt to do something about a very real problem. It was also a good idea to examine counseling and advising at comparable colleges in Michigan and around the country. It would have been an even better idea to include a few of our adjunct counselors on the Task Force. Like other adjuncts, many of our part-time counselors have direct experience working at other colleges and universities and have seen first hand what does and doesn't work.

So far, the partial implementation of the Task Force's recommendations have produced mixed results. Those mixed results are a textbook example of why adjuncts should be fully included in (and compensated for their participation in) all levels of shared governance. I'm not a counselor and probably would not have participated on the Task Force even if adjuncts were invited to do so, but in reading the report it is not hard for me to spot things that could have been done better or made clearer.

For instance, I don't like the distinctions between the duties of “full-time” and “part-time” advisors and counselors as listed in an appendix to the Final Report and I think the document is flat out wrong when it appears to say that full-time academic advisors will “serve on committees, program planning groups and task force teams that focus on student retention and success initiatives,” but neither full-time nor part-time counselors will.

While the Task Force report could

have been improved by including adjuncts, the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations by College administrators has been even more wanting. The primary problem is that adjunct counselors have been treated like mushrooms. You know what I mean—they've been kept in the dark and fed bovine excrement.

I do not mean this as a criticism of Diane Green, Lisa Jones-Harris, or any other specific administrator. As a sociologist and a former human resources executive, I believe the problem lies more with the bureaucracy than with individual administrators.

“The primary problem is that adjunct counselors have been treated like mushrooms. You know what I mean—they've been kept in the dark and fed bovine excrement.”

From my perspective it looks like the College rushed the process of implementing the Task Force's recommendations and put the cart before the horse as a result. In the fall 2011 semester, when the College began to hire, train, and utilize academic advisors, the AFO was first told that the advisors were “casual employees” who would only work a few weeks at the beginning of each new semester. After we learned from our adjunct counselors who had their feet on the ground that the new advisors were not casual employees, the College tried to tell us the advisors were a newly created job and therefore they didn't have a right to be included in our bargaining unit.

When AFO President Mary Beck and Chief Grievance Officer Tom Anderson threatened to file a unit clarification petition with the Michigan Employment Relations Commission based on the fact that the work the new advisors were doing was work previously done by counselors, the College reversed its position and agreed to include the advisors in our bargaining unit so that they could enjoy the protection and benefits of our collective bargaining agreement.

Our overall impression wasn't that individual administrators were acting in “bad faith.” Rather, our perception was that certain administrators didn't have a handle on what other administrators were trying to do.

Creating an academic advising function has merit and the Adjunct Faculty Organization is proud to represent our academic advisors. They are providing a needed and important service to current and potential students.

Not every student or potential student that comes to HFCC needs the services of a licensed counselor. We do need people who have the training and ability to quickly assist students by interpreting placement test results, helping them with the course selection process, providing them with information regarding College services, and by performing other similar duties.

In the past, such services were provided by counselors and the need for them to do so for a segment of the nearly 80,000 “service contacts” in the Counseling office in 2010 alone was the primary reason for the incredibly long lines we've seen snaking their way out of the counseling office in recent years.

The presence of academic advisors means that counselors should have more time to devote to the ever increasing population of “at risk” students. As any classroom teacher can tell you, we need more counseling, not less. We know that the College's resources are scarce, but it doesn't make sense to shrink the “pie” of counseling services when we are bringing in more and more students who quite frankly are not prepared for a college classroom and desperately need the help of a highly competent licensed counselor.

Academic advising and counseling should exist in a symbiotic relationship. It is not too late for the College to make a success out of this attempt to address the problem of long lines and interminable waits, but the accomplishment of that goal requires greater transparency and the inclusion of adjunct counselors and advisors in the process.

Member News and Notes

It was chili on the Wednesday before the Super Bowl...

It may have been spring-like weather on the outside, but it was chili inside the student center on Wednesday, February 1. At the urging of the AFO, students, faculty, and administrators forgot about the Super Bowl and paid attention to the second annual Joe Sorokac Chili Bowl.

Nine adjuncts—Tom Anderson, Christine Ashton, Jay Korinek, Sherry Morgan, Bill Norris, Glenn O’Kray, Ken Shepherd, Marty St. John, and Mike Thomas—competed for the coveted chili bowl. A jury consisting of Building Engineer Sam Greco (a self-avowed “chili head” and the maker of some of the best salsa you’ll ever taste), Greg Ivan (a former HFCC student who is now a chef at Dearborn’s Park Place Catering and Banquet Center) and Marge Swan (HFCC Vice President and Controller) deliberated for over an hour before deciding that Ken Shepherd’s “Vegan Chili” deserved this year’s award. Ken was the first to admit that he was only the sous chef (he chopped the onions) and that his wife Kala Kumar

deserves the credit for a truly delicious concoction. Kala’s recipe, which is posted on the www.examiner.com website, includes non-alcoholic beer, cinnamon, paprika, and many other “secret” ingredients. As Kala noted, “even sworn carnivores loved it.”

While Ken and Kala are justly proud of winning this year’s chili bowl, Marty St. John’s “Ground Round Surprise” was the “People’s Choice” winner for the second year in a row. Marty certainly knows how to make a chili that is “repeatable” (meaning its worth making again). Marty said his secret ingredients included a pack of “Darn Good Chili Mix,” fried hamburger patties broken up after being cooked, a dash of liquid smoke, and five strips of bacon. His complete recipe can be found on the AFO’s Facebook page. (A link to Kala’s recipe is posted there as well.)

The Joe Sorokac Chili Bowl is a fund-raiser for the HFCC-AFO Founders’ Scholarship Fund. The Fund provides annual scholarships to AFO members and to dependents,

including grandchildren, of AFO members. This year’s event raised over \$600. Including an appeal that went out to past contributors and the College community in December, we have raised over \$2,000 for scholarships in the past three months.

Board chair Dottie Pelton and AFO President Mary Beck said all of the cooks deserve praise and singled Bill Breger, Sherry Morgan, and Bill Norris out for special accolades for all of the work they did in helping organize the event. Mary and Dottie also extended their appreciation to the jury as well as to Auxiliary Services Coordinator Ed Wallish, Food Services Manager Bruce Wall, and Chef Richard Teeple for all of the support they provided. “We couldn’t have pulled it off without them,” Dottie said. “They really helped make the event a success and I know that Joe is smiling somewhere above us.”

Dottie also extended a special thank you to Art Instructor Steve Glazer who created the chili bowl that was awarded to Ken and Kala.

Mary said “don’t forget to thank all of the students, staff, administrators and everyone else who risked their taste buds and supported this year’s chili cook-off. This event is a lot of fun and I’m already looking forward to doing it again

DIA Offers Free Membership

If you haven’t visited the Detroit Institute of Arts since it reopened in November, 2007 after extensive remodeling, you’ve been missing out. Whether it’s a special exhibit or just an afternoon grading papers in Kresge Court, the DIA is well worth a visit. There’s no excuse for not going especially since educators qualify for free membership. Visit <http://www.dia.org/learn/educator-pass.aspx> to get your free membership card.



Ken Shepherd, the proud winner of this year’s Joe Sorokac Chili Bowl, poses with members of our jury of chili experts and AFO President Mary Beck and HFCC-AFO Founders’ Scholarship Fund Board Chair Dottie Pelton. Pictured (from left to right) are Beck, Sam Greco, Pelton (foreground), Greg Ivan, Ken Shepherd and Marge Swan.

Member News and Notes

MERC “Accretion” Petition Filed

On December 16, 2011, just before the end of the fall semester, the AFO and AFT-M filed a “Petition for Representation Proceedings” with the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC) “seeking to accrete” thirteen positions, mostly with titles that begin as “Lab Monitor” into the AFO’s bargaining unit.

The College had excluded these positions from our bargaining unit, even though many teaching adjuncts fill these positions, on the grounds that lab monitors are not providing for-credit instruction. As a result, these individuals are still being paid at the same rates that were in effect before the first AFO contract went into effect in July 2009.

Since the filing, the AFO and the College have submitted position papers on the issue to MERC. The College’s position apparently is that members of the AFO bargaining unit don’t have a “community of interest” with those targeted by the accretion petition and that the various positions have nothing in common with each other. We, of course, argued that the positions are involved in student learning and are an extension of the classrooms where many of the same individuals also teach.

If we fail to reach agreement, a MERC hearing will be held to decide if our petition can go forward.

AFO’s PAEC to Host \$25 Plate Fund-Raiser

AFO Vice President Glenn O’Kray and the AFO’s Political Action and Education Committee will host a dinner as a fund raiser for the AFT-Michigan PAC Fund at Glenn’s Dearborn home on Earth Day, April 22. While many such dinners cost \$1,000 per plate or more, this one

will cost only \$25 and Glenn promises that it “will be a lot more fun and better food than those dinners hosted by Republican fat cats.”

The dinner will be donated by members of our Executive Board and the PAEC so that 100 percent of the proceeds can be contributed to the AFT-M PAC to be used to help elect a Michigan legislature that is more friendly to the interests of public employee unions and sees public education as a priority, not a scapegoat. More information will be provided as the date of the dinner approaches. In the meantime, save your money and the date.

Organizing Campaign to Target Veterans as Well as New Hires

Enrollment at HFCC is down a few percentage points again this semester in comparison to the winter 2011 semester and as a result we have slightly fewer new hires this year than we’ve had in the past. As usual, our organizing committee sends letters and attempts to contact all new hires, especially those who do not choose membership.

While individual adjuncts are certainly free to choose to pay agency fees rather than become members, our goal is to educate the new hires on the value of AFO membership. For only pennies more, those who choose membership help make the AFO stronger and better able to improve our working conditions and our students’ learning conditions.

With fewer new hires to target, AFO Executive Director Bill Norris hopes to have time to contact more of those adjuncts who have been around a few semesters and have not chosen membership and who have not unequivocally let us know that they will never join a union. “We’re not going to twist anyone’s arm who is ideologically opposed to unions,” Bill said, “but we are going

to try to convince more people that choosing membership will help us build a strong AFO and a better Col-

AFO Action Results in Back Pay for 34 Mem- bers and Fee Payers

Thirty-four adjuncts in the English Language Institute, Fine Arts and Fitness, Health Careers, Nursing, Science, and Technology divisions received a welcome surprise in their December paychecks. For adjuncts in most divisions of the College there is direct correlation between “credit hours” and “contact hours,” but that is not always the case with adjuncts in the affected divisions. In the affected divisions, adjuncts sometimes teach courses that have more “weekly contact hours” than “credit hours.”

A provision in our first contract said that such employees “shall have that additional compensated time count toward the 24 credit hours needed for a step advance.” Thanks in part to a question posed by an adjunct in our English Language Institute, it came to our attention that the College was systematically (although not intentionally) ignoring that provision of our contract.

It took a little bit of pressure from Chief Grievance Officer and Lead Negotiator Tom Anderson, but we were successful in getting new language in our second contract to make the process more transparent in the future and to correct the steps of individuals negatively affected during the two year term of our first contract.

In all, our analysis found that 34 employees were incorrectly paid between 2009 and 2011. They received just under \$30,000 in back pay in December—an average payment of over \$850 each.



Science Division Leads the Way!



By Mary Beck
AFO President

It's been a long time coming, but the College is beginning to take some baby steps toward the inclusion of adjuncts in the College's governance. HFCC's governance is shared by a variety of stakeholders—the community (represented by the Board of Trustees), President Mee and other College administrators, and full-time faculty. Governance involves decision making regarding academic policies and other aspects

of our working conditions from the department/division level all the way up to the level of the "College Organization."

I have been on a mission to get the College to include adjuncts in all levels of shared governance ever since I attended an American Federation of Teachers Higher Education conference two years ago and learned about the progress adjuncts were making in their attempts to address the issue at a few other schools around the country. In September, 2010, AFO Executive Director Bill Norris and I met with the Senate of the College Organization to ask that it create a task force "that would be charged with responsibility for recommending changes to the College's Constitution and College Handbook so that adjuncts would have a defined role in governance." The full text of my prepared statement was published in the October, 2010 issue of *The AFO News*. You can find a copy of it on our website—www.hfcc-af.org.

The Senate acted by creating a task force which began work in late 2010. After taking time to consider the many implications of including adjuncts in shared governance, the task force submitted a final report to the Senate this past fall. I have not seen the final report, but I have reason to believe that the views of the many full-timers who see the wisdom and value of including us in departmental and divisional meetings, on standing committees of the College Organization, and at the semiannual meetings of the entire College Organization were reflected in the report. There are many good reasons to include adjuncts in shared governance—adjuncts have a unique perspective, collectively and individually we have a lot of talent and expertise, and we share in the commitment of providing our students with excellent educations.

As noted, we are beginning to see some progress. We were successful in negotiating a provision in our second contract that provides adjuncts with at least token compensation for participation on standing committees of the College Organization and the College Senate has asked chairs of those committees to consider adding adjuncts to their committee rosters. The Senate also encouraged divisions to consider the value of including adjuncts in department and division level governance. Participation of adjuncts in the College Organization will require an amendment to the College's constitution and with increased participation of adjuncts on standing committees that will become more of a possibility.

In December, the Science division became the first of the College's divisions to act on the issue of including adjuncts in division level governance when the full-time staff voted to copy adjuncts in on minutes of meetings; to invite adjuncts to attend department and division meetings; and voted to give one adjunct in each department a "vote" in department and division meetings. I'm not completely satisfied with these decisions (adjuncts should have at least a proportional vote), but I am very pleased with the attempt at inclusiveness these actions imply. I am encouraging individual Science division adjuncts to take advantage of the opportunity and I hope that they will—it will be good for their departments and division, for their students, and for their individual careers.

I also urge full-timers in other divisions to take a cue from their colleagues in the Science division and to pass similar resolutions in their next division meeting.

I won't be completely satisfied on the governance issue until adjuncts are fully compensated for participation in shared governance and are welcome at and included in the decision-making process at all levels of governance from departmental meetings to meetings of the College Organization. Nonetheless, I am happy with the Science Division and am pleased to see the College taking a few baby steps in the right direction.

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Web!

HFCC-AFO.org

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Help us build a
strong AFO and a
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AFO Office Hours

The AFO Office is in Room
A-024 in the basement of the
Learning Technology Bldg

Mondays: 5:00—9:00

**Tuesdays: 10:00—1:30
4:00—8:30**

Wednesdays: 10:00—1:30

**Thursday: 9:00—1:30
3:30—5:30**

Friday: 12:00—4:00

If you need immediate
assistance and the office is
closed, call 248.977.8897