

Voice college union

Cook County College Teachers Union, Local 1600, AFT, AFL-CIO

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Chapter bargaining teams roll up sleeves for new contract talks



Top – Moraine Valley faculty negotiators **Randy Southard, Keith Phillips, Hal Hackett and Jan Hill-Matula** prepare to negotiate a new contract.

Bottom – Moraine Valley support staff members **Gail Wiot, Irene Brown, Renee DeGasso-Skotnik, Rose Sakanis and Darlene Kaeding** discuss negotiations that began in February.

NEGOTIATIONS NOW are getting under way for six Local 1600 chapter contracts covering 850 faculty and non-faculty union members. Between the weak economy and the state's decision to reduce funding to colleges, negotiators know they face tough challenges ahead. But all six teams are well prepared with bargaining strategies designed to win fair contracts that reflect members' priorities.

Faculty chapters at Harper, Moraine Valley and Morton, and non-faculty chapters at Harper, Moraine Valley and Prairie State will negotiate contracts this year.

Faculty bargaining

Officers **Julie Fleenor** and **Michael Harkins** head the **Harper faculty** negotiating team. Union chapter chair Julie Fleenor told the *Voice*, "We are working toward limited negotiations and have had discussions with the administration, which have been very positive. We will be working toward a contract that reflects the change in the demographics toward a much younger faculty. The key issues will be initial placement on the salary schedule and health care benefits."

Moraine Valley faculty negotiators **Randy Southard, Hal Hackett, John Hein, Jan Hill-Matula, Keith Phillips and Troy Swanson** have been collecting data, prioritizing issues, clarifying language and planning strategies for their negotiations. Faculty chapter chair Southard has called for limited negotiations to reach a settlement quickly.

"We have notified the **Morton** board that we are interested in starting negotiations early," said faculty chapter chair **Gus Kotoulas**. "Our first meeting will be in February." Other members of the team include **Jerry Neadly** and **Diane Sarther**.

Local 1600 president **Norman Swenson** advises all faculty negotiating teams and participates in negotiations.

INSIDE

House of Rep Report	3
Local Salutes Activists	4
Fight for Counselors	5
Mixon Wins Carnegie Award....	7

Continued on page 2.

**COOK COUNTY COLLEGE TEACHERS UNION
LOCAL 1600, AFL-CIO**



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**The Voice is the winner of eight
AFT Communications Association Awards in 2001.**

Arbitrator overturns five-day suspension

OLIVE-HARVEY FACULTY member **Richard Reed** recently won an important grievance when an arbitrator overturned a five-day suspension for lack of evidence.

College president Lawrence Cox suspended Reed after accusing him of various misdeeds, but failed to present any proof to back up his claims. At the arbitration hearing, Cox and the board recognized they had a weak case, so they attempted to bring in new charges against Reed.

The arbitrator refused to consider the add-on items, saying they were outside the scope of the original discipline issued against Reed. The arbitrator then ruled the charges against Reed lacked sufficient proof and reversed the suspension. Reed received five days' pay, and had all material pertaining to the discipline removed from his file.

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Continued from page 1.

New contract talks

Non-faculty bargaining

Negotiations began in late February on a new contract for **Moraine Valley support staff**. The negotiating team limited the number of issues to 14 in the hope of finishing bargaining in a few months. The most important issues include low-cost health insurance, e-mail privacy, improved retirement benefits and a better longevity pay plan. Chapter chair **Rose Sakanis** leads a negotiating team of **Gail Wiot, Irene Brown, Darlene Kaeding** and **Renee DeGasso-Skotnik**.

Low-cost health insurance tops the issues facing **Prairie State** bargaining team. "Last year the cost of health insurance went up so much that some employees did not receive a pay raise," said chapter chair **Carole Van Kirk**. Other issues include a four-day workweek for 12 weeks in the summer, longevity pay and paid health insurance for retirees.

Union officers **Mary Azawi, Ron Greenberg** and **Pat Wenthold** lead the **Harper Pro-Tech** bargaining team into negotiations that will begin in April. The union team hopes to limit bargaining to salary increases, health insurance, professional development money and improved retirement benefits.

IFT staff representative **Bob Breving** acts as the chief negotiator for all non-faculty contracts.

Do you know when your contract expires?

Bargaining Unit	Size of Unit	Contract Expiration Date
Harper Pro-Tech	110	6/30/02
Moraine Valley staff	200	6/30/02
Prairie State	95	6/30/02
Harper faculty	200	fall 02
Moraine Valley faculty	180	6/30/02
Morton faculty	50	8/19/02
Oakton classified	320	6/30/03
South Suburban staff	150	6/30/03
Morton support staff	61	6/30/04
City Colleges	790	7/15/04
South Suburban faculty	120	6/30/04
City Colleges police	511	12/31/04
Triton mid-managers	60	6/30/05
Triton faculty	148	6/30/05
Triton classified	220	6/30/06
Total	3,215	

House of Representatives Reports



JANUARY'S LIVELY House of Representatives meeting kicked off the official campaign season for Local 1600's first contested election in more than 20 years.


Two slates contend for union officer positions and seats as delegates to the AFT and IFT conventions. Local 1600 president **Norman Swenson** heads one slate called the Independent UPC and Suburban vice president **Dennis Dryzga** tops the bill for the Democratic Independent UPC. (For complete slates, see table below.)


Prior to nominations, the delegates approved a new officer position, vice president for suburban classified staff. Both slates nominated candidates for the new post.


The House also approved a contract with Project Leap to conduct a mail ballot election. All union members should have received ballots in the mail in February. Returned ballots will be counted in March. The results will be announced at the March 22nd union meeting.


Legislative report

Delegates approved a new legislative program which focuses on the following bills:


 HB 2370: Establishes 30-years-and-out without penalty.


 HB 2990: Allows City Colleges employees to use 20 percent of accumulated sick leave pay for retirement.


 HB 655: Restores collective bargaining rights for City Colleges employees.

 HB 3066: Permits part-time faculty who teach six semester hours for two semesters to join unions.

Local 1600 legislative representative Marie Caronti reported on developments in Springfield. Unfortunately, the report included a number of bleak tidings:

 Governor George Ryan reduced the Higher Education budget by two percent for the current fiscal year. The cut represents a \$50 million reduction in funds to higher education.

 Next year's budget might not include an increase in state revenue to community colleges.

 The Illinois Supreme Court approved a new state legislative map, but the Republicans have challenged it in federal court in Rockford. Testimony on the Republican suit began January 14, but a decision had not been made by press time.

New post approved

House delegates agreed to hire Janie Morrison as the assistant to the president. Morrison agreed to a two-year contract to fill a vacant position. She will work closely with the union president on arbitration cases and other assignments.

The following chapters attended the meeting: City Colleges Security, Daley, Dawson, Harper faculty, Harper Pro-Tech, Kennedy-King, Malcolm X, Moraine Valley faculty, Moraine Valley staff, Morton faculty, Oakton, Olive-Harvey, Retirees, South Suburban faculty, South Suburban staff, Triton classified, Triton faculty, Triton mid-management, Truman, Washington and Wright.

Absent chapters were Morton staff and Prairie State.

Returned ballots will be counted in March. The results will be announced at the March 22nd union meeting.

Slates for Local 1600's 2002 union officer election

Office	Independent UPC	Democratic Independent UPC
President	Norman Swenson	Dennis Dryzga
Vice president	Judith Armstead	No candidate
Vice president, City Colleges	Stewart Sikora	Marge Piotrowski
Vice president, Suburban faculty	Donna Stadermann	Gail Wiot
Suburban classified		
Secretary	Verna Anderson	Charmaine Childs
Treasurer	Dick Fritz	Julius Nadas
Legislative representative	Marie Caronti	Sammy Dortch
Grievance	Perry Buckley	John Wenger

Local 1600 salutes activists who practice what they teach

Kathleen Meany, candidate for Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Board, spends many a cold February mornings passing out leaflets at el stops or greeting passengers at Metro stations. Later in the day, she swaps hats and heads out to teach political science students at Harold Washington College. In the evening, she often attends political dinners and Democratic ward functions before finally heading home late at night.

"Sometimes I arrive home so tired, I can't move," said Meany. "But I enjoy politics and serving on the Board of Water Reclamation District. My practical experience as an elected official makes the study of political science more meaningful to my students."

The Beverly resident represents a growing group of union members who teach and practice politics. Union members serve on park district and library boards, as trustees in municipal government, as mayors and as members of school boards.

Triton faculty members **Carol Bibly** and **Lucy Smith** hold political offices in the Village of Hillside. Currently a village trustee, Bibly previously served on the Hillside District 93 School Board. The three-



Triton faculty member Carol Bibly served as a member of the Hillside District 93 School Board until 1999. She now holds a position as Hillside Village trustee.

term trustee went into politics to help shape her community and to enhance her own understanding of the political process. Bibly told the *Voice*, "Rewards are very personal to me. They include a chance to initiate change, set goals and get people excited about it. The excitement

extends among trustees all the way to people in the community. When things happen, celebrate! Learn from the experience and move on to the next."

Hillside residents elected Lucy Smith to the Public Library Board in 1995 and 2001. As president of the board, her current duties include presiding over the monthly board meetings, acting as the official spokesperson for the board, developing the annual budget and determining board policies.

"I am pleased when the board puts creative ideas into action to benefit library users, but I get frustrated trying to stretch the limited resources to fulfill all the needs of library patrons," she said.

When voters in the Oak Lawn Park District elected Moraine Valley faculty member **Donna McCauley** to a six-year board term, she came thoroughly prepared for the job. With a BA and an MA in Parks and Recreation Administration, McCauley worked 15 years as a full-time professional employee in Alsip,

Continued on page 5.



Hillside voters elected Lucy Smith (Triton) to their library board.

Orland Park and Oak Lawn Park Districts. After amassing an impressive resume, she launched her bid for public office.

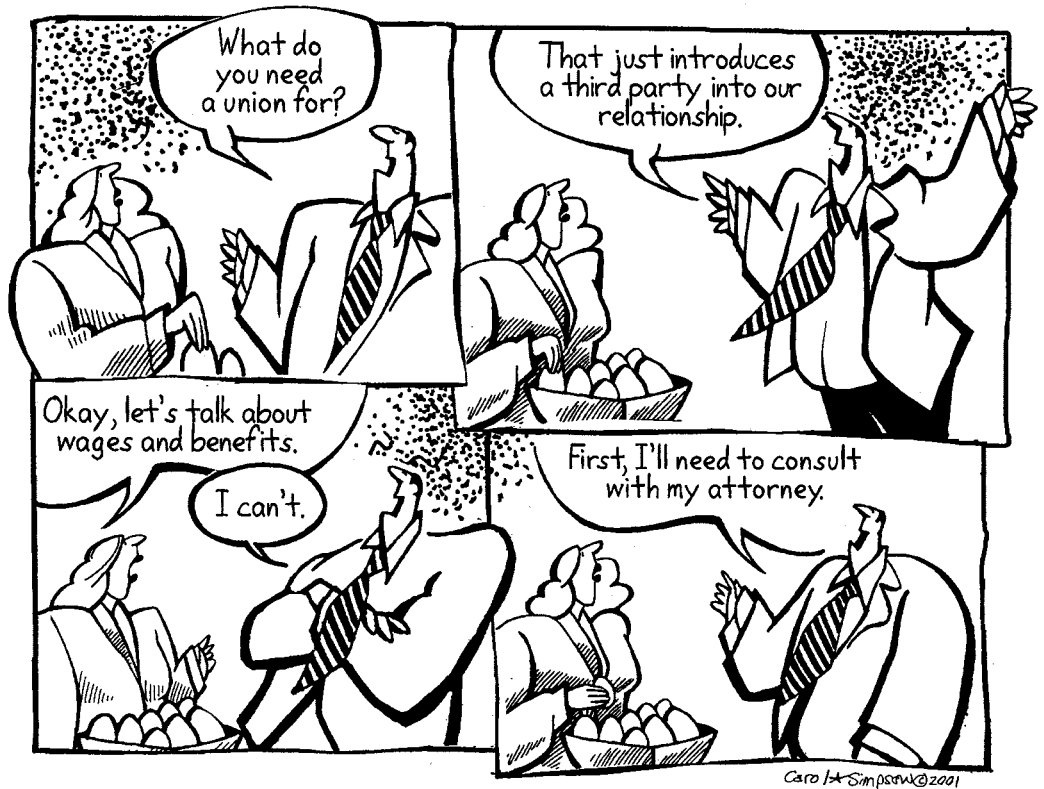
"I kept my campaign simple and direct," said McCauley. "I handed out fliers, put signs on people's lawns and met people face-to-face to explain to the community that my whole life is centered around recreation; it is my passion; it is why I teach."

Now she and the other board members oversee three swimming pools, two community centers, an ice arena, and a tennis and racquetball facility. They also set policy for all recreation programs.

School Districts 46 and 211 in northwest Cook County benefit from the knowledge and expertise of former Harper faculty member **Phil Stewart** and current Harper faculty member **Susan Farmer**.

"I ran for the school board to give back to the community my experience and knowledge in the field of education," Farmer said. Setting policy for the district and speaking at community functions are both rewarding and time consuming, she added.

Marianne Bendinelli, a member of the South Suburban support staff, serves as an elected trustee in the Village of Burnham. She won her seat by going door-to-door to meet residents and by passing out fliers throughout the community. She served one term as the chair of the finance committee and now heads the ordinance and permit committee.



Union mobilizes to fight for counselors

AT THE RECENT City Colleges academic affairs committee meeting, vice chancellor Deidre Lewis announced the results of quality reviews of the business, computer, counseling, information systems and library departments. All of the departments but one received satisfactory performance ratings. Lewis said the counseling department's performance was unsatisfactory and announced the board would take steps to improve these services at its March meeting.

Just one day later, students and faculty protested that action at the February board of trustees meeting, and demanded that the board keep current counselors.

Union president **Norman Swenson** immediately announced a series of actions the union will take to help protect the counselors from unfair treatment. The union's plan includes:

- Holding planning meetings with counselors to develop a coordinated campaign;
- Meeting with board chairman Tyree to call for an end to hostile actions;
- Enlisting the support of the Chicago Federation of Labor, the Illinois College Board and the mayor to intervene on behalf of the counseling department;
- Launching a petition drive to the City Colleges Board;
- Conducting research on the ratio of counselors to students in the City Colleges compared to the suburban colleges and to professional staffing standards.
- Organizing mass pickets at the March board meeting.

Prairie State, Morton and CCC Security prosper with union contracts

This is the tenth installment in a series about the history of Local 1600.

IN MAY 1987, Prairie State support staff affiliated with Local 1600 by a vote of 41-4. Previously, the support staff was an independent local of the American Federation of Teachers.

Retiring chapter chair **Guy Crepps** and new chapter chair **Paulette Lively** supported affiliation. "Local 1600 has the strength and expertise to aid our chapter in securing and maintaining our contract," Lively said.

A new contract in 1989 raised salaries by \$1,105 in the first year, \$925 in the second and third years, and \$1,020 in the last year of the agreement. The union also negotiated triple-time pay for all hours worked on holidays.

The union bargaining team, made up of **Sharyn Gerson, Rich Kiefer, Debby Bailey** and Local 1600 assistant **Bob Breving**, negotiated a three-year contract in 1993 with wage hikes of 5.5 percent in the first year, five percent in the second year and a wage reopener in the third year. The contract also included one additional day of vacation and an improved disciplinary procedure.

A contract extension in 1995 increased salaries 4.6 percent in the first year and 4.55 percent in the second year of the agreement.

The membership ratified the 1997 pact by a vote of 58-1. The agreement provided 5.5 percent in 1997 and 4.25 percent in the last

year of the agreement. New contract provisions included a reduced summer workweek, from 40 hours to 36 hours with no loss in salary, and a progressive disciplinary policy. Union negotiators for that contract included **Debbie Wafford, Margaret Bell, Fran Enochs, Brenda Long** and IFT representative **Nicole**

VOICES PAST

MacLaughlin.

The 1999 contract provided for wage increases of 4.3 percent for each of three years, an IRS Section 125 to shelter health care co-payments and deductibles, and a tuition reimbursement plan for courses taken outside the college.

Currently, a new union team, headed by chapter chair **Carole Van Kirk**, prepares for negotiations that begin this spring.

Part-time employees help Morton support staff seal a deal

Part-time employees made the difference in the Morton support staff election in 1995.

Part-time employee **Barb Porcellino** spoke for most of these employees when she said, "part-time employees receive no health insurance, sick leave, vacation leave or personal leave. These issues need to be addressed in the contract."

The union won three paid days off for part-time employees in the first contract. Other benefits included

wage increases of 3.7 percent in each of the three years of the contract and upgrades for four employees.

After a seven-month struggle, the support staff won a new contract in 1998. Highlights of that contract included upgrades for 10 employees and employer-paid dental and vision insurance for individual employees. Part-time employees won an additional paid day off each year.

Union members enthusiastically ratified the 2001-2004 contract by a margin of 58-2. The contract granted wage hikes of 4.4 percent first year, 4.45 in the second and third years, and 4.8 percent in the last year of the agreement. A longevity plan provides yearly increases for all employees with 11 or more years of experience. Other benefits include stipends for educational degrees, a new tuition reimbursement plan and a freeze on all health care costs in the final year of the agreement.

City Colleges Security hang tough to win first contract

A gritty group of 250 part-time security officers in the City Colleges fought for two years to win their first contract. After winning a 1998 union election, chapter negotiators **Charmaine Childs, Marjorie Bryant, Frank Irwin** and **Otis Love** faced many obstacles before reaching an agreement in 1999.

First, City Colleges refused to bargain over wages for one year. Management later broke off negotiations for one month. The union was then dealt a severe blow when CCC vice president and chief negotiator **Judge Watkins** passed away.

But the determined employees pressed on. Months later, they won a four-year contract with salary increases of 16.9 percent for all security officers and 12.55 for all security aides. The contract also provides for paid breaks after four hours of work, protection against unjust discipline and paid uniforms.

"For the first time in all the years I have been employed in the City Colleges, I will receive a salary increase every year," union leader Marjorie Bryant said. "Prior to the contract, I went four years without an increase in pay."



Morton College support staff members Marie Griffin, Wendy Herrarte, and David Nissim-Sabat joined 40 other union members at a victory party after the successful contract negotiations in 2001.

Mixon wins Carnegie Award for teaching excellence



Constance Mixon

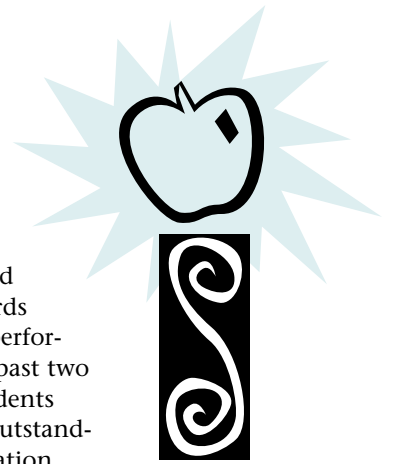
THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION selected Daley College's **Constance Mixon** as its Illinois Professor of the Year. The Carnegie Award salutes extraordinary undergraduate teaching by honoring educational leaders who inspire and motivate others.

Mixon was chosen from a field of 385 nominees. The judges particularly commended her for her *Beyond the Soundbyte* lecture series, in which area politicians such as County Clerk David Orr and State Senator Lisa Madigan are invited to speak to her class.

Mixon also serves as advisor to the political science club, which sends more than 300 students each year to the Illinois Model Government Competition. Students

engage in simulated debates and can receive awards based on their performance. For the past two years, Daley students have won the Outstanding Small Delegation Award.

The political science teacher says she brings a hands-on approach to teaching students. "I try to make them think of how government affects their lives. The government makes the roads on which they travel to school and provides the water they use to take a shower. Usually students only see government as a body that taxes."



Union allocates \$20,000 for leadership training

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES recently approved a \$20,000 plan to help members develop the skills they need to become successful union leaders. Proposed by City Colleges vice president **Judith Armstead**, the new leadership plan is "an important step toward developing a new group of union activists to lead the union for the next twenty years," she said.

"The future of the union is in the hands of people who do not currently serve as union officers," Armstead said. "Over half the candidates on both slates will retire in the next five years. We need to develop their replacements."

The program will provide yearly seminars on important union issues such as grievance handling, negotiations, duty of fair representation, political action and lobbying, and current educational issues.

Members may also take leadership classes offered by the Illinois Federation of Teachers, DePaul Uni-

versity Labor Center, the University of Illinois and the American Federation of Teachers.

Recently, 10 union members took advantage of the training by attending a one-day seminar on organizing part-time faculty. The workshop, which was conducted by Elgin Community College faculty union president **Dave Sujack** and IFT representative **Bob Breving**, focused on the benefits and pitfalls of organizing adjunct employees.

The Local 1600 members who attended the workshop included: Union officers **Verna Anderson** and **Marie Caronti**; chapter chairs **Darnell Sanford** (Kennedy-King), **Pat Cooks** (Olive-Harvey), **Bill Naegele**

(South Suburban faculty), **Donna Stadermann** (Triton classified) and **Maggie Hahn Wade** (Triton faculty); and members **Judy Darst** and **Stewart Sikora** (Triton faculty) and **Phil Stuckey** (Harold Washington).



Judith Armstead

Personal glimpses



Mark Robinson

CHEERS FROM TRITON faculty members echoed through McCormick Place as faculty member **Mark Robinson** carried the Olympic torch into building. They came to honor Robinson, outstanding teacher, Vietnam veteran, marathon runner and church leader. He and 175 other runners

carried the torch through Chicago.

Robinson was nominated to carry the torch by fellow union member **Stewart Sikora**. "I heard an advertisement on radio that said they were looking for people who are inspiring to others. The first person I thought of was Mark."

The ad prompted Sikora to write an essay to the Olympic committee describing his colleague's achievements and leadership qualities. Clearly impressed, the Olympic committee chose Robinson to carry the torch.

Robinson called carrying the torch a once in a lifetime experience and a great honor. "I was especially appreciative that one of my colleagues thought enough of me to nominate me," he said.

McGraw-Hill published the third novel of South Suburban faculty member **Sally Beckman** called *No Place to Hide*. Beckman told the *Voice* the book is a modern suspense novel. Intriguing...

Olive-Harvey faculty members **Michele Graham, Paulette Pennington-Jones, Rochelle Robinson** and **Gail Upchurch** attended the Guild Complex's Women Writers Conference at the Harold Washington Library and Roosevelt University.



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