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# 1650 REPORT

EDITOR: BETSY COHN

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## POLITICAL ACTION 2008

With higher education becoming an increasingly significant focus of both state and national legislators and policy-makers, the importance of our involvement in political action cannot be overstated.

Two major local political events face HFCC in 2008 and 2009: the election of two College Trustees and the renewal of 0.5 mill, set to expire in 2010 and essential to support College operations. In 2008, Local 1650 must also work to elect officials to State office who are supportive of higher education and the funding it requires.

Regarding national races, the Federation must provide information on candidates and their policies.

Consequently, Local 1650 members will be asked for a variety of support this year, including letter writing, help with mailings, and contributions to Local 1650's Political Action Fund.

Soon, Local 1650's Executive Board will recommend a PAF contribution amount, and Area Representatives will begin collections.

How will your PAF contributions be used? Local 1650 operates two PAF funds.

The first, a "restricted" fund, is used only for local millage/bond elections, Board of Trustees' campaigns, and the campaigns of municipal and/or State legislative candidates whose (page 2)

## 1650 WELCOMES NEW TEACHERS

Local 1650 extends a very warm welcome to several new teachers this fall.

The following join us as tenure-track full-time faculty: Rama Chidambaram, Mathematics; Paul Fisher, Business and Economics; Susan Green, Nursing; Sam Plaza, Social Science; Meena Sharma, Social Science; Catherine Wakefield, Nursing; Margaret Waters,

Health Careers; Helen Weeks, Health Careers.

Additionally, we welcome temporary full-time faculty in several divisions: Jeffery Click, Culinary Arts; Donald Coursey, Science; Mark Foret, Science; Jacqueline Lawson, Placement; Susan McGraw, Fine Arts/Fitness; Brian Stewart, Technology. (page 2)

## Political Action (page 1)

impact directly on HFCC revenues.

The Local uses the “unrestricted” fund to engage in political activity and to support County and State candidates not so directly involved with the revenues of HFCC but whose decisions definitely affect Local 1650’s ability to represent the interests of its members.

**No Local 1650 PAF monies go to national political parties or candidates for federal office.**

The Executive Board is grateful for the membership’s historically strong support of Local 1650’s political efforts to protect their bargaining rights and secure the local and State funding necessary to operate HFCC, maintain instructional quality, and secure equitable compensation.

## New Teachers (page 1)

An orientation session was held on August 20 for new teachers to meet and socialize with members of the Local 1650 Executive Board, receive background on the Local’s role on campus and in the Dearborn community, and review key features of the contract.

The new teachers were encouraged to become active in Local 1650, by attending the monthly membership meetings and/or

by joining one or more of the committees (Political/Legislative, Insurance, Technology, or Solidarity).

Local 1650 General Membership Meetings are held the third Monday of the month at 3:15 p.m., in room L-311 of the Liberal Arts Building.

## TECH COMMITTEE UPDATE

During the past academic year and over the summer, the 1650 Technology Committee met to discuss several issues. Foremost in the Committee members’ minds was the need to press forward with an on-line version of the student faculty evaluation procedure.

Currently, because the evaluations depend on in-person distribution and collection of forms, classes that are 95% or more online have not been receiving formal student evaluations.

After developing and getting feedback on an evaluation tool that aligned with online teaching methodologies and issues several semesters ago, the Committee ran into technological obstacles related to its online administration, assurance of privacy, and assurance of security.

Largely thanks to the very hard work of David Maier (CIS), the Committee may be close to resolving these issues (page 3)

## Tech Committee Update (page 2)

and having an instrument that can be administered through the UCompass course management system used by the College.

Furthermore, in an effort to reduce costs associated with the scantron evaluation system used in face-to-face classes and to “go green,” the Local’s ultimate goal is to change over entirely to an online system of student evaluation for all classes, though the logistics have yet to be fully analyzed.

The Technology Committee discussed other issues as well, many of which were raised by Jeff Morford (Mathematics; Local 1650 Treasurer) following his attendance at a session on distance education at the AFT’s Higher Education Conference last spring.

These include administrators’ review of online courses and associated concerns

about privacy rights and accuracy of reviews; issues of parity in the administrative review of online and face-to-face classes; whether online teachers can hold office hours online instead of in person; how to ensure governance participation as the online class loads of many teachers increase; and whether online instructors should be compensated for having to revise their online course content if the College switches to a new course management system.

This semester, the Technology Committee will return to these issues, focusing on implementation of student evaluations of online courses and on developing a protocol for administrative review of probationary teachers’ online courses.

## LOCAL 1650 COMMITTEES

Few things set HFCC apart more as an exceptional place to work than the opportunities faculty have to participate in shared governance and to shape the direction of the institution.

In fact, participation in governance work is a contractual responsibility for tenured teachers – and a primary focus of evaluation for probationary teachers starting in their third year.

In addition to serving on college-wide or departmental committees, teachers can fulfill their contractual responsibilities by serving on one or more of Local 1650’s committees. Are you a political junkie, or do you simply want to learn more about local and state

politics that affect our College and working environment? Then the Political/Legislative Committee is for you!

Are you especially concerned about insurance issues, and do you want to be involved in researching trends in health care coverage and providers or in educating the membership about key insurance issues? Then check out the Local 1650 Health Insurance Committee and sit in on some meetings.

Perhaps your interests lie in technology and its uses in teaching or instructional evaluation. Then the Technology Committee needs you!

Of course, Local 1650’s welfare resides not just in such serious topics but in (page 4)

## Local 1650 Committees (page 3)

developing camaraderie as well. How about joining the Solidarity Committee and helping to plan the Local's social functions, such as the holiday party or the Local's periodic pizza extravaganzas?

As you can see, no matter your interests, 1650 has a committee for you. To find out more about any of these committees,

contact John McDonald or anyone on the Local's Executive Board. Also, see the brief summaries of the committees' recent activities throughout this newsletter. Then come make your mark!

## NEW LTC PURCHASE OPTIONS

Recently, Local 1650 Health Insurance Committee has worked closely with the College Vice-president/Controller Marge Swan to improve the employee purchase options under the contract's Long Term Care Insurance (LTC) coverage. Currently the contract's LTC coverage provides an employer paid LTC facility benefit of \$3,500 per month for 24 months or an in-home professional care benefit of \$1,750 per month for 48 months.

Previously, 1650 members could purchase the following coverage improvements: a monthly benefit of up to \$6,000, benefit inflation protection, benefits payable to family members providing care (Total Home Care), and coverage for family members.

Effective November 1, LTC employee purchase options will improve as follows: a monthly benefit of up to \$8,000 and a benefit duration of up to 72 months.

All Local 1650 members and family members are urged to give careful consideration to maximizing their LTC coverage. You may wish to consult a financial planner in this regard as well. The rate structure available through UNUM is very attractive and not available in the general market place.

For further information and enrollment materials, contact the Local 1650 office or the College's Human Resource Office. You may contact the College's UNUM Representative at 248-351-1610.

## DECISIONS FOR NEW HIRES

### MPSERS vs. ORP

MPSERS (Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System) is a "defined benefit" retirement program, which guarantees a pension benefit deriving from a formula based on income and years of service.

MPSERS also provides retirees with hospital-medical-surgical, dental, and vision insurance coverages. Accumulated MPSERS benefits can only be carried to another employer participating in MPSERS – another Michigan community college or a Michigan public school district. (page 5)

## Decisions for New Hires (page 4)

Teachers selecting MPSERS should seriously consider the opportunity to purchase five years of service time in the system. Since the cost of such purchase is based upon age and income, the sooner one purchases service time, the less expensive it is.

ORP (Optional Retirement Program) is a “defined contribution” system. The “pension” of an ORP participant derives from employer contributions to an investment portfolio and the return generated by those investments. ORP does not guarantee a pension amount; the participant’s pension is dependent upon the success of the individual’s ORP investments.

ORP provides no health insurance coverage. This too must be provided by the return on the participant’s investments – and will have to be purchased upon retirement at the individual, not group, rates in effect at that future date. ORP, unlike MPSERS, is portable, meaning that its accumulated value is maintained by the participant, regardless of place of employment.

The decision regarding MPSERS and ORP is irreversible and should be given very careful consideration. Local 1650 recommends that you consult a financial planner regarding a decision of this magnitude.

### Pension Supplement

Article XXIV of the contract provides \$1,650 per year, and additional monies beginning at the tenth year of service, for the purchase of service time in MPSERS or to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity (TSA) program (403b, 457b, Roth 403b). For information on these tax sheltered annuity programs, consult the “Mutual Funds” page at the Local website: [hfccft1650.org](http://hfccft1650.org).

### Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

Article XXI.I. of the contract provides the opportunity to allocate pre-tax dollars to cover uninsured medical expenditures and/or child care expenses. Payroll deduction forms, available through the Local 1650 and College Human Resources Offices, are due by December 1. The November 17 General Membership Meeting will focus on Pension Supplement and FSA.

## HFCC ADJUNCTS BARGAIN

The HFCC Adjunct Faculty Organization (AFO), which handily won its organizing election in May, has held its first bargaining session with the College Administration last week.

The AFO represents nearly 600 HFCC adjunct faculty, who teach approximately one-half of the student contact hours at HFCC. The AFO will no

doubt seek the contractual protections that full-time faculty have long enjoyed and adjunct faculty sorely lack: job security, the due process protections of a grievance procedure, a competitive wage scale, access to group health care coverage, support for professional development, and office space suitable for student conferences. (page 6)

## HFCC Adjuncts Bargain (page 5)

The Adjunct Faculty Bargaining Team is led by Thomas Anderson, Chief Negotiator, and Mary Beck, AFO Interim President, and is supported by AFT-Michigan staff.

Local 1650 supported the adjunct faculty in their organizing drive and supports the AFO in its efforts to negotiate an equitable contract – first, because HFCC’s adjunct faculty

have a right to secure their professional lives and livelihoods and, secondly, because the College and its students will benefit from the improved morale, institutional commitment, and dedication to students that derive from all faculty being treated as professionals.

John McDonald

## 1650 MARCHES IN LABOR DAY PARADE

The largest contingent of Local 1650 members and retirees in several years joined their union brothers and sisters on Labor Day to demonstrate the strength and resolve of Metro Detroit’s labor movement.

Following a festive and resounding march down Woodward Avenue to Hart Plaza, the 1650 contingent and family members joined the throng which turned out to hear Presidential candidate Barack Obama.

The Local 1650 and the AFT-Michigan leadership very much appreciate the active support of 1650 members, 1650 retirees, and their families on Labor Day: Jan Bartos, Erin Bartos, Ed Demerly, Angela Haithikhanavala, Michael Hill, Shauna Hill, Nathaniel Hill (1<sup>st</sup> parade at age 7 months), Jeanetta Thomas, Thomas Kelly, Gerald Klein, Diane Mancinelli, Denise McDonald, John McDonald, Michael McDonald, Gwen Pringle, Eric Rader, Kevin Trovini, and Helen Weeks.

## 1650 WEBSITE: [hfccft1650.org](http://hfccft1650.org)

Consult the Local 1650 website to learn about the history of your union, your contractual rights and benefits, and legislation that affects your future and that of the College.

Teachers new and old to the College should review the informational links regarding 403b, 457b, and Roth 403b plans recently added to the Mutual Funds page.

## 1650 PRIDE AND FASHION

Local 1650 makes it easy to show your union pride while looking and feeling good! For a modest price, you can dress well in a Local 1650 polo shirt (\$25) – or dress *really* well in a polo shirt *and* 1650 baseball cap (\$15).

As the weather turns colder, how about adding a Local 1650 jacket (\$60)? Now you’re talking! If you’d like to purchase any of these items, or simply see them in person and try them on, swing by the Local’s office, A-201 in the Learning Technology Building.