

MSP Chronicle

The Massachusetts Society of Professors | Representing Faculty & Librarians on the UMass Amherst Campus



From the President's Desk

By Eve Weinbaum, MSP President

Welcome to September! I hope your summer was joyful and rejuvenating, and I hope this will be an easy and productive beginning of the academic year for all of you.

MSP staff and activists have been busy all summer and I wanted to update you on our activities and plans for the fall semester.

Believe it or not, soon we are heading back to the bargaining table to begin negotiating our next contract. MSP board members and department reps have begun conversations with faculty and librarians about your concerns and things you would like to see change at UMass. We are finding that these individual or small group discussions are more productive than the online surveys we have done in the past. By talking directly with our colleagues, we can learn why certain issues are important, what the impact is on your teaching and scholarship, and how deeply each issue matters to different groups of members. These conversations will continue this semester. Please reach out to your board member or department rep – we would love to treat you to coffee or tea anytime!

So far, we have identified some major issues that are important to our members, including the future of online and multi-modal education, a Teaching Professor tenure track, reasonable raises as well as merit pay to cover the past three years, an

improved dental plan, and family and medical leave benefits for non-tenure-track (NTT) and part-time faculty and librarians, equivalent to the new Massachusetts Paid Family and Medical Leave law.

We are also talking about ways to incorporate faculty and librarians' larger concerns into our contract negotiations. The MSP has always advocated for fully funded and debt-free higher education and progressive revenue to meet human needs, and we are talking about adding climate change and sustainability to our list of priorities. We look forward to working with students, our colleagues in the other unions, and community groups who share our agenda.

We have also prioritized gender equity and racial justice. The joint MSP-Administration Gender Equity Committee will meet soon to finalize a list of recommendations. We look forward to collaborating with the team of faculty leading the NSF ADVANCE grant to improve equity and inclusion. And we have made progress toward the new pay equity process that will replace the old dysfunctional anomaly process. Jessica Pearlman in the Institute for Social Science Research



**WE
are the
UNION**

**SAVE
the
DATE**

Personnel Committee Workshops
Sep. 23 & 24, noon-1:30 PM
162-175 Campus Center

New Faculty & Librarian
Reception
Sep. 26, 4 PM - 6 PM
Please contact the MSP office to
RSVP and for information

Dan Clawson memorial
Oct. 13, 2019, noon - 4:00 PM
Marriott Room, Campus Center

Tenure Workshops
Oct. 28 & 29, noon-1:30 PM
904-908 Campus Center

Sr. Lecturer Promotion Workshop
Nov. 12, noon-1:30 PM
162-175 Campus Center

Have an upcoming event
enhancing MSP's mission you
would like MSP to announce?
Contact the MSP office at:
msp@umass.edu
(413) 545-2206

worked hard on data analysis for every department at UMass, and this fall we plan to finalize a process to allocate pay equity adjustments. We look forward to making the first round of adjustments at the end of this year, with raises retroactive to September 2019.

As we continue this work and prepare for contract negotiations, we need your input and your help. We will have bargaining support committees

(continued on p.3)

Remembering Dan Clawson

By Max Page, MTA Vice President and Departments of Architecture & History

As we all return to a new year on campus, we will do without one of the most important figures in the MSP's history, Dan Clawson. A past president of the MSP, MTA board and executive committee member, professor of sociology, and tireless fighter for social justice causes on campus and off, Dan died on May 7.

Dan was not supposed to be on campus this fall – he retired at the end of the spring. But those who knew Dan knew that we would be continuing his work – fighting to build a powerful MSP and MTA to win the schools and colleges our kids deserve – even if he was done with his paid job at UMass Amherst. So many of us relied on him. I am still jolted each time I reach for the phone to call him, to share some good news, to get advice, to ask him to show up, to get a dose of inspiration. I simply cannot imagine doing this work without having learned from him, struggled alongside him, and planned and strategized with him for the past two decades. I know that there are so many at UMass, in the MTA, in the labor movement nationally, not to mention in the fields of labor studies and sociology, who feel the same way.

The list of roles Dan played within the MSP and MTA are many. He served

on bargaining committees and then took over as president of the MSP in the early 2000s. During that time, he helped transform the MSP into a social justice, activist local within the Massachusetts Teachers Association. He was a founder of PHENOM (the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts) and of Educators for a Democratic Union, the progressive caucus of MTA members who helped elect Barbara Madeloni, Merrie Najimy, and me. After passing the torch as MSP President, Dan served on the MTA Board and Executive Committee.

But all of these offices and accomplishments do not capture the impact Dan had on our union. He pushed relentlessly for a more democratic MTA, one that would push back against politically driven reform, one that would engage more and more members in speaking up and organizing for public education, one that would put racial and economic justice at the forefront of its mission.



Dan Clawson and Eve Weinbaum with the MTA contingent at the Women's March in Boston in January 2017.

He used his seemingly endless activist energies over the past decades in the MSP and MTA because he believed that a strong education union, motivated by a social justice philosophy, was essential to securing the Commonwealth he wanted to live in.

We all will miss having him in our lives and in the struggle. ■

Advocacy Through the MSP

By Erica Scharrer, MSP Grievance Officer and Department of Communication

At the MSP office, many things begin (and end!) in the expert hands of long-time senior staffer Lori Reardon as well as MSP organizer Emily Steelhammer. The faculty and librarian advocacy arm of the MSP typically takes just that route. Lori or Emily receive a call or an email from a member who is dealing with something problematic, challenging, concerning, or confusing. Emily usually works with non-tenure-track faculty while Lori tends to focus on tenure-system faculty. Often, Lori and Emily can help that person out on the spot by clarifying the collective bargaining agreement, pointing to contract language that sheds light on the topic, or otherwise responding to the issue. But sometimes these phone conversations and emails call for the work of the MSP advocacy team.

The MSP has a small but devoted group of Faculty

Advocates – faculty and librarians who volunteer their time – whose work involves engaging in in-person conversations to listen to the challenges, concerns, and changes our members are experiencing at the university. Faculty advocates act as a resource and support system for any issue that can be resolved directly. This past year, for example, MSP grievance specialists and Faculty Advocates have accompanied our members to meetings with administrators at which important issues or questions are at stake; helped clarify, change, or enforce members' memoranda of understanding/employment contracts; served as a resource for climate condition inquiries and outcomes; followed up when required pay bumps or other benefits were not processed; worked out years of credit, pay, review processes and other details when indivi-

(continued on p.4)

Farewell Mickey

This past June MSP bid farewell to our long time MTA consultant Mickey Gallagher, who retired after over 30 years of service to MTA, 11 of them as our field representative. Mickey served as our chief negotiator for five rounds of bargaining and was key in securing gains for every group in our bargaining unit, from NTT to tenure-track to librarian. She was particularly astute at proposing creative solutions to resolve tough situations for individuals as well as at the negotiating table. Her skills are truly remarkable, and she will be greatly missed. We wish her all the best in her retirement and thank her for all she has done for MSP! ■



It says "Mickey's Margarita". Just right for a retiree.

Welcome Heather

In July I began my new assignment as the MTA Consultant for MSP Amherst.

I've been active in the labor movement for over 10 years working with professional employees, including nurses, public school educators, and child-care workers. These union members have a passion for their profession and an investment in their stakeholders – whether patients, students, or the community – that inspires and invigorates me. I saw that passion in my first union job with the Massachusetts Nurses Association, and subsequently when I worked for the American Federation of Teachers organizing early childhood educators. I experienced it in my work with the National Education Association (NEA), both here in Massachusetts with the paraprofessionals, teachers, and ESPs I worked with daily, and the educators I met from across the country when facilitating at national conferences.

Two years ago I left the NEA to stay in Massachusetts full time, working for the MTA in the Division of Higher Education. I've had the pleasure to work with faculty and staff at the community colleges, state colleges, and with faculty at UMass Boston.

Having attended UMass Amherst for both my undergraduate and graduate degrees, I'm excited to be back on campus in this new role. As I reflect on the excellent education I received at UMass, specifically my graduate work at the Labor Center, it feels apropos to return to the campus where I cemented my own passion and commitment. I look forward to working with the over 1,600 faculty and librarians who are MSP. ■



Heather LaPenn sporting a "Save Our Public Schools" sticker.

(President's Desk, continued)

on each of the major issues we identify as priorities, and we need faculty and librarians to help develop proposals, research the issues, testify at contract negotiations, and raise awareness on campus and beyond. If there

is an issue that matters to you, please reach out to your union. Whether you've been at UMass for 30 years or 30 days, this is the perfect time to get more involved with the MSP. We are looking forward to working with each and every one of you! ■

Q: *How many union members does it take to change a light bulb?*

A1: *Are you kidding?*

A2: *50.*

(see page 7 for the rest of it)

Member Activism and the All In Campaign

By Marc Liberatore, MSP Board Member and College of Information and Computer Sciences

Academic year 2019--2020 has just started, and the labor of building and maintaining a strong union goes on. Continuing the All-In campaign that started two years ago, the MSP officers, board, and a core group of activists have been actively working to get new faculty involved in the union, to extend a welcome to faculty who haven't yet joined, and to keep the membership up to date on and involved with the important work the union does year after year. Here are some ways in which we have been engaging with our members:

- We have found that the vast majority of bargaining-unit members choose to join the union as dues-paying members when they start at the University. MSP staff and an MSP activist meet with all new employees for a new employee orientation session. During these sessions, incoming faculty get a chance to hear about the many benefits MSP has negotiated for over the years, and to talk with a current member about what the union has done for them.
- MSP activists have been fanning out across campus to visit faculty

who have not yet joined the union. Sometimes these conversations are short -- "I'm not a member? I thought I was!" Sometimes they are longer discussions about the union's objectives and how they fit with the potential member's thoughts. Always they are interesting. We look forward to hearing from those of you we have not yet connected with MSP.

- Under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, MSP has the right to visit faculty meetings once each semester. We are using this right more regularly, as a way to keep members informed of past and ongoing work the union does both on campus and off. Most recently, at the top of the list were continuing negotiations via labor/management committees. Two of these, one on equitable pay and one on CPE/online education, in particular led to lots of discussion.

(Advocacy, continued)

duals have changed from the Professional Staff Union to the MSP; and otherwise fought for our members in a wide variety of ways.

The MSP contract lays out steps for members' challenges and concerns to be vetted, mediated, and—hopefully—resolved. A small number of problems cannot be resolved informally, and these will undergo a formal grievance process. But most issues are resolved informally, through discussions and/or negotiations that occur biweekly between MSP's advocacy team and Michael Eagen in the Office of the Provost.

Faculty Advocates/grievance specialists at the MSP can be particularly helpful during major personnel actions. We have provided feedback on members' personal statements as well as written responses to evaluative memos submitted at any level of review during tenure and promotion processes. We assist in ensuring that the review process is done

properly, and we help negotiate changes to the process when issues or conflicts arise. For example, we make sure that the appropriate number of external reviewers provide memos and advocate for the composition of department personnel committees for small units or for members' whose work bridges units.

Current faculty advocates are Randy Phillis (Biology), Eliot Moss (Computer Science), Louise Antony (Philosophy), Betsy McEaney (Teacher Education & Curriculum Studies), Marc Liberatore (Computer Science) and Melanie Radik (Libraries). The Grievance Officer coordinates the Faculty Advocates and acts as a liaison between the advocacy and grievance work and the rest of the work of the MSP. The MSP's Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) consultant — for many years, the incomparable Mickey Gallagher and now the remarkable Heather LaPenn — has a huge role to play in the process as well. Together with Lori, the MTA consultant organizes all of the issues that surface and keeps track of the progress of the case. They discuss the issues

(continued on p.5)



Marc Liberatore in front of his class.

We are recruiting volunteers to get involved in the Fund Our Future campaign that is organized by our parent union, the MTA. Several dozen of our members were active in the fight for more funding this past year, including going to Springfield and Boston to talk to our legislators. There remains work to be done on the campaign this year, and we would be delighted to have you join us.

As always, we're looking for members who want to get involved and participate in these and other activities. Talk to your department's MSP representative or board member (or think about becoming one yourself!) – we'd love to hear from you! ■

MSP Grant Report: Emergent Strategies at the Library

By Madeleine Charney, Library
Research Services



The Emergent Strategies Learning Circle members sharing what they learned with library staff.

The Professional Development Committee of the Librarians' Council was granted \$472 from the MSP grant program to host a summer learning circle at the Du Bois Library. Response was robust: 24 library staff members across 11 departments and three unions (MSP, PSU, USA) participated. We met six weeks in a row; each session was co-facilitated by two people.

We used *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* by adrienne maree brown (AKA Press, 2017) to explore our relationship to change: individually, in the workplace and in society. The book uses science fiction as a tool "to practice strengthening our imaginations, our capacity to think beyond the limitations of our socialization - beyond competition, beyond binaries, beyond linear, short-term outcomes." (<https://alliedmedia.org/esii>).

Above all, Emergent Strategy offered us permission: to be human, to be flawed, to take some time for reflection, to be in a messy process and not feel pressure to fix everything at once. The leisurely pace and the spirit of creativity was notably enjoyed by all. We made change-themed collages, sharing them with pride (see photo). We learned an improv theater exercise, sharpening our listening skills. We wrote thank you notes to colleagues, explicitly naming what we appreciate about them. We practiced compassion-based mindfulness techniques. And in keeping with brown's principle "small is good, small is all", we sourced our snacks from micro-local enterprises Atkins Farm and Simple Gifts and

purchased them with a Common Good card, a local system that funds community projects (see p. 7).

At the end of our six sessions, we invited all of the library staff to drop in for a glimpse of what we learned, setting up stations corresponding to each session/chapter (see photo above).

The Emergent Strategy Learning Circle supported MSP's mission in many ways, including:

- **Improving working conditions**

We envisioned and manifested, "a world of abundant justice, abundant attention, and abundant liberation." It's all about how we see and treat each other as whole people.

- **Stimulating internal organizing**

Centered on social justice, "a way of being, a way of approaching facilitation and movement-building that helps us to allow action to organically happen," we learned new ways to run effective meetings that felt humane.

- **Building coalitions**

We considered how to follow patterns in the natural world. Canada geese rotate positions in their V formation as leader, weight carrier, follower. We can take a page from the geese.

I highly recommend this book for practical and spiritual skill building. In the humble and humorous words of brown, "You don't need to read the whole thing. Just pages 15 and 41-42 (the elements and principles). That's the whole book!" ■

(Advocacy, continued)

with representatives from the central administration and generally take the lead on both the informal and formal actions that result. The Grievance Officer adds a faculty member's point of view to these processes, as needed.

As MSP members, it is important to know that you, too, have access to these systems and processes. We love to help whenever we can. Advocating for our members to work together for

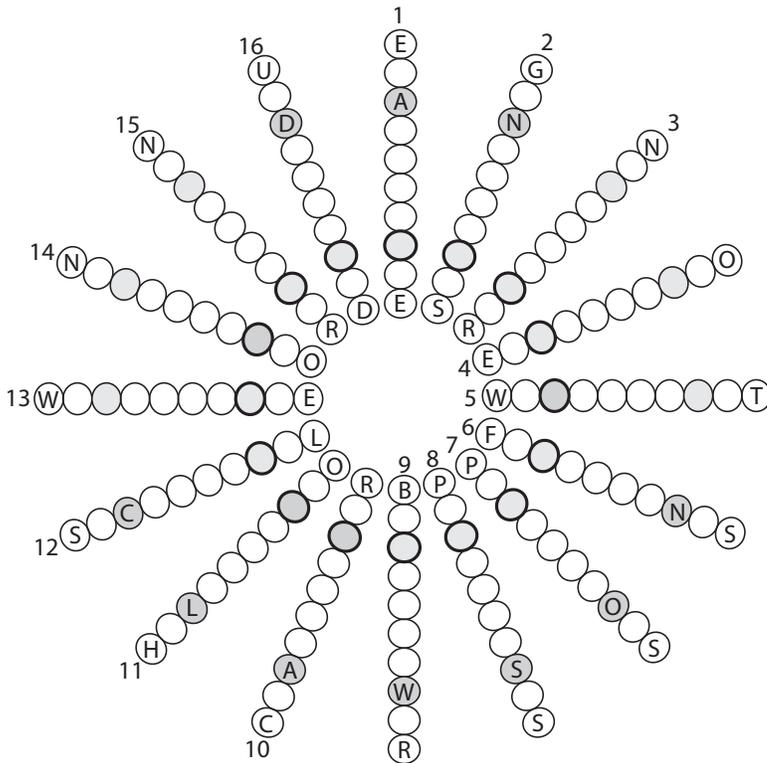
the best possible processes, conditions, and outcomes is one important reason to be All In with the MSP!

Advocates make up the MSP Grievance Committee. Please consider joining us! The purpose of the MSP faculty/librarian Grievance Committee is to become informed and knowledgeable about provisions in the collective bargaining agreement that will enable committee members to recognize contract violations. Committee members work directly with faculty and librar-

ian colleagues who are encountering work-related problems and share issues with the MSP office staff and Executive Board members to resolve issues and guarantee due process for bargaining unit members. We need a few more faculty members to join our group. Participating in a grievance process is a great way to learn how the MSP contract works and get credit for university service at the same time! Register your interest by emailing us at mSP@umass.edu. ■

MSP Launches Pilot Dues Abatement Program

The MSP executive board has strived over the years to keep down membership costs. Nevertheless, we recognize that even with our low fees, some members might face a period of severe financial hardship that would make dues payments difficult. To address this, the MSP is piloting a dues abatement program. This program aims to provide financial relief to members in true need, thus allowing them to more easily enjoy the full benefits of union protection and also to participate in union governance. Committed MSP members are eligible to apply for a dues abatement that will last for a period of one year, with the possibility for a one-year renewal. For more information on the dues abatement program or for information on the application procedure, please contact the MSP office.



1. Fervently promote
2. The act of being tender
3. "My position can be ___" (2 wds)
4. Makes one fond of
5. "When do ___" (part of chant, 3 wds)
6. What you call those who do clue 1.
7. What you call those who do clue 5.
8. Broadcasts widely
9. Cranial ability
10. University leader
11. Giving aid (2 wds)
12. Fruitful
13. What a bargaining team says at the start of negotiations (2 wds)
14. Chanted phrase of college student protestors: "___ debt..." (3 wds)
15. Dan was this at the bargaining table (2 wds)
16. Dan was this at the bargaining table

THE MSP PUZZLE

The May 2019 puzzle was a connect-the-dots picture. If you did the tracing you know that the picture was of the Fund Our Future logo image at the right above. Don't you feel like you are back in 4th grade?

This puzzle we're calling a "Danagram". Dan Clawson was a colleague, mentor, advocate and friend to many MSP members. Place your puzzle answers in each of the numbered spokes. The answers begin at the numbered circle (mostly L to R or top to bottom). One concentric circle of cells says "DAN CLAWSON". The other highlighted circle will contain a phrase about Dan. Each answer contains a word or phrase that describes or relates to Dan. Note that multi-word answers include the space between the words.

Your task is to find the phrase that describes Dan. The first reader to submit the phrase by October 1, 2019 will win a UMass dining coupon. Send your entry to MSPpuzzle@gmail.com. Open to MSP members. Decision of the judge is final. You can't win unless you enter!

Common Good: The Payment Card that Strengthens Our Local Community

By Madeleine Charney, Library Research Services

A group of 25 MSP and PSU members gathered at the Du Bois Library on June 12th to learn from William Spademan, founder of Common Good, about the local payment card that creates a funding pool for local community projects dedicated to renewable energy, small business development, food systems, social justice, the arts and more. Last year, Common Good account



holders invested \$19,000 in Franklin County projects that increased their social, environmental, and economic health. Users of the Common Good card also save local participating businesses thousands of dollars in credit card fees while generating funding for local projects. A goal of Common Good is to allow our community's economy to be managed by the people who use it – us! This is democracy at work. ■

Art/Culture

- Eggtooth Productions;
- Greenfield Gallery (Greenfield)
- Gallery Sitka; The Art Garden (Shelburne Falls)
- Garlic and Arts Festival (Orange)
- Shea Theater Arts Center (Turners Falls)

Education/Support

- A2Z Science & Learning Store (Northampton)
- A.J. Hastings (Amherst)
- Amherst Copy and Design Work
- Copy Cat (Northampton)
- Montague WebWorks (Greenfield)
- New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (Greenfield)
- Seeds of Solidarity Education Center (Orange)

Energy

- Coop Power (Florence)
- Northeast Biodiesel (Greenfield)
- Solar Store (Greenfield)

Farm/Garden

- Amethyst Farm (Amherst)
- Broadfork Permaculture (Montague)
- Foxtrot Herb Farm (Shelburne Falls)
- Red Fire Farm (Montague)
- Simple Gifts (Amherst)

Food

- Amethyst Farm (Amherst)
- Atkins Farm (Amherst)
- Barts Ice Cream (Amherst)
- Elmer's Store (Ashfield)
- Franklin Community Cooperative (Greenfield)
- Fresh Side (Amherst)
- People's Pint (Greenfield)

Health

- Breathing Space Yoga & Mindfulness Studio (Holyoke)
- Greenfield Community Acupuncture
- Nancy Paglia Massage and Yoga

(continued from p. 3)

Q2: Why 50?

A3: It's in the contract.



Higher Ed Advocacy Day at the State House.

Photo credits this issue include Eric Berlin, Madeleine Charney, Emily Steelhammer, the Common Good web site, and the MTA web site.



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IN THIS EDITION

From the President's Desk	1	Member Activism and the All In Campaign	4
Remembering Dan Clawson	2	MSP Grant Report: Emergent Strategies	5
Advocacy Through the MSP	2	Dues Abatement Program	6
Farewell Mickey	3	The MSP Puzzle	6
Welcome Heather	3	Common Good Local Payment Card	7