
May/June 2010

The APA

NEWSLETTER

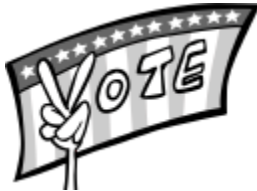
The Official Newsletter for the Administrative Professional Association of MSU
MSU Administrative-Professional Association MEA/NEA/1480 Kendale Blvd, Suite 300/East Lansing MI 48823/(517) 353-4898

Report from the 2010 Spring MEA Representative Assembly

April 23 & 24

by Maury Koffman

President/Chairperson, MSU APA



On April 23 and April 24, the Michigan Education Association held its annual spring Representative Assembly ("RA"). It is at this annual democratic assembly where the business directives of the MEA are decided.

This year's RA began with a union rally on the steps of the capitol to deliver the message to our legislators that public education cannot withstand further reductions in funding. Nearly 650 MEA union members, including those representing the APA, participated in the rally. A strong message was received when we delivered 100,000 personal, hand-written postcards conveying concerns about budgetary reductions at MSU and other public education institutions.

On the floor of the RA, the main issue debated revolved around annual dues assessment. The debate focused on the proposal from the MEA Board of Directors to increase the annual maximum dues by \$10 per member.

While times are difficult and financially constrained, it still remains important to have an active and strong union to support local bargaining units around the state.

Following much discussion on the RA floor, the proposal to increase MEA annual dues by \$10 was passed by the Assembly. The APA Executive Board is aware of the difficult times we face as MSU employees and is working

diligently to minimize the impact of the annual MEA dues increase. And while the MEA dues increase is a done deal, how the APA reconciles the dues increase is a work in progress with member input sessions to be held and updates to come.

It remains critical that APA delegates to the MEA RA continue the tradition of representing the interest of the APA membership to ensure that our parent organization's operation is congruent with the needs and desires of our local APA union members.

MEA Organizing Rallies: May 24 & June 24, 2010

Let Our Voices Be HEARD!

by Deb Porter

Legislative Committee Chairperson, MSU APA

Join us on May 24 for a local rally on the steps of the capitol as we speak on behalf of state funding for public education in Michigan.

"We must let our 'higher education' voices be heard," says Deb Porter, MSU APA legislative chairperson and executive board member. "Our elected officials need to understand that you cannot balance a state budget through continued massive cuts, especially in public education. They talk about how the survival of our state is dependent upon a more educated and diverse workforce, but education costs money. We have got to let them know how we feel."

To date, the rally is slated to start on the campus of Lansing Community College (LCC), circle the capitol and end back at LCC with speakers and refreshments. Details will be forthcoming via the APA listserv.

There is a statewide rally planned for June 24, also. "Please note that while details are still being worked out, we hope for a large turnout," states Porter. "We can't be heard if we don't show up."

MSU Health Care Update

Long Term Care Insurance Extended to APA Members



The Michigan State University Long-Term Care Insurance plan, administered by John Hancock, can help provide protection against the high costs of long-term care that can result from the effects of aging, illness, or a serious accident.

This plan will be available to eligible AP members starting July 1, 2010, including AP Confidentials and their eligible spouses and MSU-recognized individuals such as parents, parents-in-law, grandparents, grandparents-in-law, adult children and siblings.

For more information, or to request an enrollment kit, call the John Hancock Customer Service Center at 1-800-705-4529, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Eastern Time. The TTY number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-255-1808.

Eligible MSU employees can log in to eHR and click on the Long-Term Care link, or eligible family members can visit <http://msu.jhancock.com> (username: msu; password: mybenefit).

2010 MSU Benefits Open Enrollment: April 19-May 10

There is still time to participate!



If you haven't done so already, you still have a few more days to participate in the 2010 MSU Benefits Open Enrollment process. This is required for employees wishing to change their health care provider as well as

making any changes to their personal status, for example dropping/adding dependants.

Please note that whether or not you choose to change providers, if you have an eligible spouse or OEI (other eligible individual) on your plan, you must participate in Open Enrollment to maintain the dependant's benefit status.

Also, all current PHP clients who do not participate in open enrollment will automatically be moved to the BCN plan beginning July 1, 2010.

To participate in Open Enrollment now:

1. Go to www.hr.msu.edu on the Web.
2. Click on the "eHR Login" link at the top of the page.
3. Enter your MSU NetID and password.
4. Click on "Benefits Enrollment and Information."
5. Click on "Benefits Enrollment/Changes."
6. Select either "Open Enrollment" to make plan updates, or "Open Enrollment -- Affidavit Only" if you need to continue coverage on your spouse without going through Open Enrollment.

To see NEW Webinars on Open Enrollment and the Blue Care Network (BCN) lowest cost plan option, and for more information, visit www.hr.msu.edu/openenrollment. You will also find FAQs about the new BCN product as well as other vital information regarding your health care benefits.

Please remember any changes made during Open Enrollment are effective July 1, 2010.

Contact MSU Human Resources Benefits at benefitsinfo@hr.msu.edu, 517-353-4434 or 1-800-353-4434 if you have any other specific questions.

Put Your Ed Assist Dollars to Work!

The following HRD classes are open for enrollment:

Tuesday, May 11: [Department Of Homeland Security I-9 Forms](#) (9-11am; Free) New class to make sure that we comply with the complex federal hiring regulations.

Tuesday, May 11: [Meeting Management Skills](#) (1-4:30pm; \$95) Offers practical tools to help you get the return on your time investment.

Thursday, May 13 and Friday, May 14: [Breaking Free From Stress](#) (8:30am-4:30pm); this is a two-day class. \$290) Manage challenging and stressful situations.

Preparation for upcoming systems change:

Friday, May 14, [What is EBS? A Quick Overview](#) (8:30-10:30am; Free) Get caught up on what you need to know about the Enterprise Business Systems (EBS).

Your educational assistance benefit runs through the summer semester. Any unused portion does not carry over to the next academic year. Summer semester may be a good time to continue to hone your professional skills. The summer 2010 Odyssey contains the listings of both, HRD and LCTTP professional development opportunities.

Information about Course Fee Courtesy: This benefit is for the dependents of eligible faculty and staff. The student has to be admitted to MSU as a regular student. To apply, please use the [Online Course Fee Courtesy Application System](#) for new applicants. Questions: Contact Julie Rorick at rorick@hr.msu.edu or 517-884-0177 regarding eligibility and coverage.

Students who are enrolled for spring semester and receive CFC will automatically have CFC applied for summer, if still eligible. No new CFC application needs to be made. If they do NOT want CFC for summer they need to contact the Office of Financial Aid at 353-5940.

Transfer credits count toward the total number of credits allowed by this benefit. Your dependent's eligibility ends at the conclusion of the semester during which the 120th credit is attempted. Please refer any questions to Julie Rorick at 884-0177 or rorick@hr.msu.edu.

Know Your Contract!

Article 37: Extended Disability Leave

Article 39: Long Term Disability Plan



Of course we all hope that it will never happen to us...illness that will lead to long term disability. But, if it

does occur, the APA contract does provide for disability coverage through our provider, CIGNA.

Beginning on page 65, with Article 37, paragraph 281:

--The University provides an interim income protection plan for regular full-time staff expected to receive Long-Term Disability benefits. The benefit provides full base wage/salary in cases expected to result in total disability, as defined in the Long Term Disability Master Contract, for a period of up to one hundred eighty (180) days from the employee's last day of active work. The benefit commences upon the expiration of all accrued sick, vacation and personal leave.

--282 Determination of whether a case is expected to result in total disability can sometimes be made by the University-designated physician based on information received from the employees' physician and other medical reports. A lack of conclusive medical evidence may delay approval of the Extended Disability Leave benefit, until Long-Term Disability benefits are approved. If so, payments will be made on a retroactive basis. In these cases, it is necessary for the employee to maintain benefit payments. Reimbursement will be made for University contribution amounts upon approval for Extended Disability Leave.

--283 Employees expected to return to work within one hundred eighty (180) days will not qualify for this benefit. Authorization to pay Extended Disability Leave benefits will be made by the Benefits office. The University pays the cost of the benefit. No application is necessary for enrollment. Benefit becomes effective upon completion of sixty (60) continuous full-time equivalent service months. The benefit terminates on the last day of employment. Conversion of coverage is not possible.

Page 67, Article 39/Long Term Disability Plan continues:

--285 The University provides income protection through the Long Term Disability Plan for regular full-time staff.

--286 The benefit is payable to employees who become totally disabled as defined in the LTD Master Contract and are unable to work due to sickness or bodily injury. In addition, the University makes the regular contribution for health plan coverage and pays the complete cost for dental and Employee-Paid Life Plan.

--287 The University pays the entire cost of the LTD benefit. Coverage is automatic and becomes effective the first day of the month following or coinciding with completion of twelve (12) continuous full-time equivalent service months. Long-Term Disability coverage will terminate on the employee's last day of active employment.

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WEBSITE:

<http://www.msuapa.org/>

**Executive Board meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of each month commencing at 2:00 p.m. in the APA office located at 1480 Kendale, Suite 300, East Lansing. Visiting members should call in advance to verify the time and place.*

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