
November/December 2009

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

Legislative Update

What's happening with Higher Ed?

by Maurice Koffman

President/Chairperson, MSU APA



This past September, as the Michigan legislature faced a repeat of the governmental closer in 2007, many special interest groups spent a significant amount of time and money lobbying for their interests. Working to ensure limited cuts in special programs around the State, some entities were less affected than others. During this tumultuous time, our parent organization, the Michigan Education Association, fought to limit and stabilize public education funding.

While much time and effort was devoted to fending significant cuts to k-12 per-pupil funding, MSU APA worked with several members of the MEA Governmental Affairs department to assist with the Michigan Promise Scholarship and general higher education state funding concerns. As President of the APA, I spent my evenings downtown at the Capitol, speaking with our local legislators and hoping to influence the vote of those in congress not within our district. Having the assistance of lobbyists from the MEA as well as access to a myriad of resources and research aided this process.

The reality is that federal stimulus funds are currently assisting by placing a financial band-aid on the deep cuts made to higher education already passed around the country. While issues like the Michigan Promise Scholarship were initially cut from the Michigan budget, other proposals to increase funding for MSU are largely attributable to the efforts of the MEA. Even the state and local newspapers took notice that the MEA had roughly

75 members working each and every evening as congressional sessions ran until 2am.

The fight is not yet over. Proposals are still being presented. MSU still faces staggering cuts to state funding. Each APA member needs to do his or her part and contact local legislators. It is critical that political leaders downtown hear from their constituency and not simply elected leaders or staff from our state organization. If you need further contact information for your local legislator, please visit www.mea.org/votes.

MSU Educational Benefits

Your resource for job and career journey to success!

by Edita Herbstova, CHRS, CERRP

Assistant Director of HRD, Michigan State University

Michigan State University is committed to continuous professional growth of employees at all levels. Once regular employees have completed 12 months of continuous service, they are eligible to utilize their educational assistance benefits.

Human Resource Development (HRD) administers the Educational Assistance benefit. The benefit provides financial support to help you enhance your educational background and improve and broaden your professional skills at MSU. Opportunities supported by Educational Assistance include:

- Degree-related and job-related credit courses at MSU or other accredited institutions
- Non-credit technical training such as learning new computer software at MSU's Libraries, Computing and Technology Training Program (LCTTP), or other approved providers
- Non-credit courses offered by Human Resource Development (HRD), covering subjects such as leadership, team building, communications, dealing with conflict and change, time and stress management, organizational skills, university

policies and procedures, multi-cultural awareness, writing and presentation skills, customer service, and many more

Educational Assistance benefit consists of two parts: A credit class component and non-credit component. The credit component provides up to 14 (fourteen) semester credits in an academic year at up to the maximum of MSU life-long rate per credit. The non-credit part provides up to \$800 per academic year.

This academic year, the maximum available value of the benefit is \$6,695.50. Benefit information can be found on our website

www.hr.msu.edu/prodev/ss_prodev/tuitionAssist.htm.

Julie Rorick is HRD's Educational Assistance administrator (Rorick@hr.msu.edu, 517-884-0177). She will be happy to answer your questions about the benefit and your desired program's eligibility for coverage.

Eligible AP employees are working on certificates and degrees at all levels at MSU and at other accredited institutions – from Associate's to PHDs, including law degrees, supported by their Educational Assistance. During the 2007/08 academic year 204 APs have utilized the benefit for 560 credit courses totaling 1580 credits. During the same time period, 616 APs participated in 1165 non-credit courses, including HRD, LCTTP and other non-credit courses and training activities.

The current academic year 's numbers show a similar enrollment trends in training and development participation indicating APs continued commitment to professional growth so important in today's changing environment.

Human Resource Development strives to be the training provider of choice for job and career-related training and development. Our current offerings can be found on our web site

www.hr.msu.edu/prodev/ss_prodev//ss_prodev/.

The catalog offerings vary each semester. Additionally, HRD works with departments to design and deliver customized programs to meet their specific needs and business goals. Please contact Edita Herbstova (Herbstova@hr.msu.edu, 517-884-0172) or Dawn Hecker (hecker@hr.msu.edu, 517-884-0133) for additional information.

Some HRD courses offered this semester that AP's may find beneficial include **Excellence in Writing Workshop, Living and Flourishing in Times of Change and Transition, Practical Ways To Influence Others For Positive Outcomes, Project Management Fundamentals, Goal Setting for Professional Success, Three Keys To Exceptional Leadership, Communicating In Times Of Change, Egoless**

Leadership, Breaking Free From Stress, among others.

HRD welcomes your suggestions and requests for specific topics to help you meet your training and development needs and goals and be your partner on your journey to success.

NEW Member Orientation

Stop By and Learn About Your Union!

by *Vikki Tormala*

Membership Chairperson, MSU APA



Are you a new employee with Michigan State University? Have you recently made a transfer to the APA bargaining unit from another on campus? Or are you nearing the end of your probationary or trial period and want to learn about the union in which you belong?

Well, good news! If you haven't already heard, the APA offers a new member orientation meeting to answer many of the questions you may have about your organization.

The next orientation meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, from noon-1 p.m., in the Spartan room at the International Center. A dining voucher will be provided, so you won't have to go without the mid-day meal!

Please RSVP to Sue Ives at sives@mea.org if you plan to attend. We want to make sure we have plenty of meal vouchers for attendees!

Hope to see you there!

StraightLine

Services & seminars for your investment future.

StraightLine, provider of retirement investment advisory and management services to the employees of MSU, is pleased to announce our 2009 Fall Seminar schedule.

Approved by MSU in 2008, StraightLine provides voluntary retirement investment advisory and

management services to faculty, staff and retirees. We offer our independent, 3rd-party investment services and a fiduciary standard of care regarding your investments in the 403(B) Base and 403(B) Supplemental Retirement Plans, and the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan.

Whether your accounts are held at TIAA-CREF, Fidelity, Vanguard, AXA, AIG or Lord Abbett, StraightLine is here to assist you in managing them.

For those interested in learning more about this valuable resource available to you for your MSU retirement account, we welcome you to attend a 25-minute informational seminar.

Please join us at one of the dates and times below:

Nov. 9th @ noon & 4 p.m.; Comm Arts, Rm 191
Nov. 13th @ noon & 4 p.m.; Comm Arts, Rm 191
Nov. 17th @ noon & 4 p.m.; Main Library, Rm W449
Nov. 18th @ 8 a.m. & 5 p.m.; Main Library, Rm W449

Food and beverages will be provided at each seminar, so we kindly ask that you please RSVP:

info@myRplan.com

877-EDU-403B (877-338-4032)

Know Your Contract!

Article 9: Seniority



Starting with paragraph 58 of Article 9 of the APA contract, "Seniority" is defined as the length of continuous employment starting with the original date of hire with the University. Periods of authorized leaves of absence do not cause loss of seniority.

-59 Seniority rights are relinquished by the employee for the following reasons:

- a. Voluntary resignation
- b. Retirement
- c. Termination

- d. Failure to accept recall from layoff, provided the position offered was at a comparable compensation grade level to provide the employee 80% or more of his/her salary earned at the time of layoff.
- e. Failure to return from leave of absence.
- f. Failure to be called from layoff based on University Seniority and Recall Rights (see chart on page 16 of APA contract).

-60 Employees returning to employment with the University within twelve (12) months of termination from University employment shall receive credit for all past seniority upon successful completion of a six (6) month trial period. Employees returning to the University more than twelve (12) months after terminating will receive credit for the past service after working for five (5) additional years. Such prior service credit shall be applied toward retirement.

-61 Employees will receive service month credit for part-time service to qualify for retirement benefits.

Lunchtime Information Meetings

Continue in 2010...New sessions offered!



You asked for it and we brought it to you!

Due to the successful response from our membership, APA is offering a new round of noontime information meetings beginning in 2010.

Upcoming topics will include a look at your state and federal rights as a union worker and how to keep you marketable in today's workplace. If there are topics of interest to you and that you think would be of interest to your colleagues, contact APA communications chairperson, Cynthia Schneider at cschneider@mea.org

Be sure to look for an announcement regarding upcoming noontime information meetings via the APA listserv.

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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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