

Questions for Margaret Wong

- 1. What impact has the Janus Decision had on MCCC membership? What type of outreach has been most effective in retaining current members or signing up new members?**

It has not been as bad as the MTA had prepared us for – 10-20 percent decrease in membership. In fact, because many former Agency Fee payers have become members, we have had a net gain in membership. The final numbers will be presented at the delegate assembly. One-on-one outreach has been the most effective method of signing up new members. A new membership committee was authorized by the MCCC Board in November. It is headed up by the MCCC VP/Strategic Action Coordinator (Rosemarie Freeland) and the MCCC Treasurer (Gail Guarino), who will be working with every Chapter to development a membership team on each campus.

- 2. What is the status of the Day Contract negotiations? What are the major sticking points? Do we anticipate the need for action from our members to get to a tentative agreement? (Work to Rule)**

We have not moved forward beyond what has been presented in the last contract update. A Contract Action Team has been established and are developing strategies to support the bargaining team. A new update will likely be sent out after the Day Bargaining Team's next meeting on January 30, 2019.

- 3. What is the plan for implementation of the newly ratified DCE Contract?**

The DCE Contracts have been signed and new salaries, as well as the new benefits are in effect. The new DCE contract is available online: <https://mccc-union.org/dce-contract-forms/> Printed copies should be available by mid-February. Retroactive pay should have been paid out in the December 28, 2018 paycheck. Keep an eye out for MCCC DCE Coordinator Joe Rizzo's advisories.

- 4. How is your leadership plan different from the past leadership?**

I don't think my leadership plan is all that different from the plans of past leadership. Every president before me wants the same things — to build up membership, strengthen the union overall, consistently enforce the contracts, and make sure we are committed to our core principles of adequate pay, optimum working conditions, pay equity, etc. The challenges I face are different from past MCCC administrations because post-Janus has essentially reduced the amount of money available to do almost nothing beyond basic contract enforcement. For example, MCCC Officers' salaries have been cut in half and at-large Executive Committee members compensation has been cut to zero, so I have to be sensitive to how I ask officers or members of the Executive Committee to do extra work. Nevertheless, I am as committed as time permits to moving our union forward.

- 5. Much of the focus of the MTA and NEA is on K-12, has there been any discussion of increasing focus onto MCCC issues/concerns?**

We do discuss this at every Executive Committee and Board of Directors meeting. Our VP/SAC Rose Freeland, as well as our NEA Director (Candace Shivers) and MTA Directors (Joe Nardoni, Joe LeBlanc, and Cathy Boudeau) present on how they push the MTA constantly to focus on the issues facing the MCCC. They have made recommendations to the Board, which are being carried out.

6. **Is there some way we can launch a campaign to get the public to understand what the real issues are? Maybe an ad in the Globe or a mass mailing or whatever.**

This is a subject constantly being discussed by the MTA Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Committee. It has been determined that newspaper ads, mass mailings, radio ads, etc. are ineffective in changing public perception, even less so now that fewer people get information via traditional media. Even at the height of traditional media consumption, the amount of money the MTA has for media buys was not enough to change public perception. However, the recent “NO on Two” campaign, which combined the organizing strength of individual members, along with strategically placed traditional (newspaper, radio, television) and non-traditional media (Google, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) buys *was* successful in turning public perception around. So the answer is yes, we *can* launch a campaign to inform the public about “real issues,” but it would involve serious work on the part of individual union members for such a campaign to work.

7. **Besides \$\$\$, there are fundamental issues of POWER that need to be addressed. It seems that a whole bunch of things are "management prerogatives" shielded from any union input.**

It is always a good idea to do a power analysis when trying to get something you want. To begin with the assumption that “management prerogative” exists is to give up your own power before management has even lifted a finger. This is not to say that the union should create a contentious foundation with every situation. However, when there is something of true value to fight for, collective action is as much, if not more, powerful than what contract adjunction can provide.

8. **Related to (7), are there any teachers' unions that you know of anywhere in the US that have included decisions about closing programs, running courses, etc., as part of the collective bargaining agreement? It seems a shame that tenure or no tenure, management seems to have ultimate control over who stays and who goes.**

Hoping that there exist unions that have built into their legal or institutional structures the ability to prevent Management from making executive decisions is not really the direction to take this inquiry. First of all, no such unions exist or can exist. Employee groups, like professors in private higher education institutions who have executive authority, cannot unionize because they are Management. Secondly, that such unions do not exist doesn't mean that unions can have no impact on decisions. While the ultimate determination about programs running, hiring and firing employees, running courses, etc. rests with the Presidents and the Boards of Trustees, there is usually much that organized union members, working with students, the press, and community members can do to influence or change the minds of those involved in making the final decision. Collective organizing can be very powerful and can be and has been effectively used at some of the community colleges.