

MTA Today

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BRINGING HEAT TO THE STREETS

Standing together in the fight against union-busters

By Laura Barrett

MTA local affiliates are standing up with one another as the *All In* effort enters a new and exciting phase of mutual support. A few examples:

■ Members from Cambridge, Lexington, Malden, Marshfield, Haverhill, Medford, Andover, Burlington and Danvers — along with locked-out National Grid gas workers, students, parents and community activists — turned out at an Everett School Committee meeting on Oct. 1 to support the Everett Teachers Association. Jessica Haralson, a Malden teacher and Everett resident, said she came to the meeting after learning that teachers are “living in a culture of fear.”

■ Local associations in Springfield, Agawam, Northampton, Easthampton, South Hadley, Belchertown and Chicopee have formed the Western Mass Educator Action Network — WeMEAN — to support one another’s efforts to win passage of Fund Our Future resolutions and other initiatives. School committees in Western Massachusetts that have already passed resolutions include Berkshire Hills, Chicopee, Springfield and Amherst-Pelham. Locals in the Northeast have formed a similar loose coalition, with Haverhill taking the initiative.

■ The MTA and other public-sector unions rallied on Sept. 24 outside an event sponsored by the Pioneer Institute, an affiliate of an anti-union

network whose goal is to “defund and defang” public-sector unions. Governor Charlie Baker was a speaker at the event. The protesters chanted, “Hey hey, ho ho, Charlie Baker has got to go!” He is under fire for supporting privatization of public services and for holding up the funding of public higher education contracts, among other issues.

“Being in a union means that you are joining forces to build solidarity with your co-workers and grow collective power to create the workplaces, schools and colleges we all deserve,” said MTA President Merrie Najimy. “Being *All In* takes this to a whole new level. It also means joining with employees from other buildings, districts, campuses,

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This edition also includes the MTA’s 2018 General Election Guide and the Fall issue of *The MTA Advantage*



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MTA’S MISSION STATEMENT

The Massachusetts Teachers Association is a member-driven organization, governed by democratic principles, that accepts and supports the interdependence of professionalism and unionism. The MTA promotes the use of its members’ collective power to advance their professional and economic interests. The MTA is committed to human and civil rights and advocates for quality public education in an environment in which lifelong learning and innovation flourish.

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ON THE COVER

MTA members are taking to the streets to demand that the Legislature fully fund public education. Members of the Haverhill Education Association, pictured on the cover, marched on Sept. 13 to call attention to the need for a significant increase in resources for Massachusetts public schools and colleges.



On Sept. 22, the Chicopee Education Association held a similar event that drew more than 300 educators, parents, children and community leaders. In addition, a number of locals have gotten their cities and towns to pass resolutions urging legislative action. Coverage of the MTA’s “Fund Our Future: Invest in the Schools and Colleges Our Communities Deserve” campaign begins on Page 6. Also included in this edition is the MTA’s 2018 General Election Guide, which features recommendations on candidates and ballot questions.

Cover photo by Chris Christo
Cover design by Joshua Degregorio

Quote-Unquote

“There is only one thing left to do for those of us who share disappointment in this moment: Vote.”

— NEA President Lily Eskelsen García, reacting to the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh as a U.S. Supreme Court justice

Teacher of the Year imparts love of math

By Jean Conley

Jamil Siddiqui has a knack for making those around him feel comfortable — not just with math, the subject he teaches at East Bridgewater Junior/Senior High School, but with the learning process itself.

On National Teacher Day last May, Siddiqui was named the 2019 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year — not just because he is an extremely effective teacher, but because he has the added gift of helping students fall in love with a subject they never thought would become their passion.

The students cheered wildly during a surprise assembly in the school auditorium when they learned that their popular and dedicated teacher had been chosen for the award. The honor automatically makes Siddiqui a candidate to become the next National Teacher of the Year.

Among those who lined up on stage with Siddiqui at the assembly were 10 of his former students — all of whom are currently teaching math at the high school or college level. Not everyone could make it that day, but at last count, 15 of his former students were working as math teachers, Siddiqui said.

Bill Pellegrino, who nominated Siddiqui for the award, was a student of Siddiqui's for three years and later became a colleague, working as an academic support specialist in East Bridgewater before he became a math teacher himself at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School.

Pellegrino said that on his first day in class as a sophomore, Siddiqui encouraged the students to gather around.

“Come closer to the knowledge,” Pellegrino remembered Siddiqui saying. “And he said it with a smile on his face,” Pellegrino said. “He was so genuine. He wasn't challenging us — he was encouraging us. I moved to the front, and from then on I was a front-of-the-room person.”

Pellegrino said he nominated Siddiqui for one simple reason: “He is the greatest teacher I've ever met.”

Siddiqui “taught things in a really different way,” Pellegrino added. “He never focused on grades. He never focused on giving tests and quizzes and homework assignments. That was not what was important to him.”

Instead, Pellegrino said, Siddiqui's teaching “was always about a discussion, and I had never had anybody teach me math through discussion and getting at the core idea before. It really changed my opinion. I fell in love with math.”

Plymouth South High School math teacher Brad Leal was also a student of Siddiqui's. At the assembly, Leal told the students that he was “the most average student this school had.”

“But Jamil took me in with open arms and he changed my life,” Leal said. “I had no plans to be a teacher up until that senior year with him. He really did it all.”

Siddiqui grew up in Caribou, Maine, in the far northeast corner of the state. “It was a city where you



Photo by Bob Duffy

Jamil Siddiqui wrapped up the 2017-2018 school year in May with seniors in his AP calculus class. Siddiqui brings his commitment to shared responsibility to his teaching style.

knew everyone and they knew you,” he said. That small-town feel created closeness and a culture of shared responsibility, a quality that his busy working mother encouraged in Siddiqui and his brothers. They came to see working hard in school as holding up their end of the bargain.

After receiving a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering and a master's degree in education from Boston University in the 1990s, Siddiqui applied for 25 teaching positions around Massachusetts. He received 24 rejection letters.

Just one district offered encouragement and an interview: East Bridgewater. In September, he began his 25th year there as a teacher.

Siddiqui brings his commitment to shared responsibility to his teaching style. “You've got to be there to support the kids, both inside and outside your classroom,” he said.

When he was fairly new to teaching, Siddiqui decided to delve into school and town activities.

“I wanted to see every event, so I made sure I went to the sporting events, the marching band events, the plays, and the school musical. I tried to really see what the school was all about. The kids noticed me, and they saw that I was interested in them.”

He said that by being free with his time early on, he laid the groundwork for mutual respect between student and teacher.

“Success comes when both sides realize that they need to work together,” he said. “Once you establish that relationship, the teaching part is easy. It's getting them to buy in and want to do the work for you.”

Siddiqui has been the faculty advisor for five different graduating classes. He coached the math team for 21 years and acted as the faculty advisor for the yearbook committee for three years. He is

the school's student activities coordinator, advises the Student Senate and is the lead teacher in his department.

Only in the past year and a half, since the birth of his son, Jacob, have Siddiqui's school activities become somewhat less numerous. Siddiqui's wife, Rebecca, is a teacher of U.S. history at the school, and both are members of the East Bridgewater Education Association.

Siddiqui said that for years he left the business of the union to others with more experience. He said he decided to become more involved when one day he woke up and realized, “Now, I'm the old man!”

In September, Siddiqui began his second year on the EBEA negotiating team. Bargaining for a new contract was set to begin in October.

As the school year wrapped up for seniors in Siddiqui's AP calculus class last May, Patrick Silva sat with the other students clustered at the front of the room.

“From the first day you sit down in class, Mr. Siddiqui prepares you to do well,” Silva said. “He adapts to our learning styles. He is so friendly and responsive.”

As the class began, Siddiqui reviewed the year with his students.

The scope of the discussion ranged from the relevance of different number bases to scientific notation, from bank interest to the limitless applications of math in the natural world. Siddiqui deftly wove in fractals, including the “Koch snowflake” and the “Sierpinski triangle,” leaving the students with a parting gift: the intrinsic beauty of math.

But as Siddiqui knows well, he'll see at least a few of these students again. They will be back to visit, as so many have in the past. And some may even decide to make his life's work theirs as well.

Democracy is more than an election

“Democracy means a culture of control by the members,” wrote Alexandra Bradbury in her March 2018 *Labor Notes* article, “The Only Way to Survive *Janus*.” It is such a powerful idea that I’ve written it on the wall in my office to serve as a guiding principle for my work as MTA president.



Merrie Najimy
MTA President

Why do I find it so powerful? Both because it reminds me of my own practice as an educator and because, too often, we don’t experience democracy in the places that we care most deeply about and to which we devote most of our time — our classrooms, our worksites and our union.

Democracy in the classroom — or the absence of it

We come into this profession wanting to give students agency. Putting decision-making in the hands of students allows them to take ownership of their learning and prepares them for life in a democracy.

Teaching in an affluent district — with well-resourced schools and where children with privileged lives come to school with far more than just their basic needs being met — afforded me the luxury of creating a culture of democracy in my classroom. My students could take charge of their learning. Educators who work in districts with adequate resources can more readily create conditions in which students have a say. That should be the norm for all students.

But in far too many districts, two decades of austerity have created conditions that have deprived

When we start to talk to each other about how we can make conditions better, we begin to imagine that something else is possible, and then we resist.

students of small class sizes and essential resources such as school nurses, counselors, and even sufficient time for lunch and recess, all of which are central to meeting their basic needs. Educators spend the day trying to maintain a semblance of control and keep children safe. In underfunded districts, conditions of austerity have become the norm and often limit what we imagine is possible for our students and schools.

And the accountability regime, which is robbing us all of our autonomy, makes our worksites undemocratic.

The absence of democracy at the worksite

Education “reform” mandates, driven by the agenda to privatize public education from prekindergarten through the university level, have been imposed unilaterally from the top, all too often by bullying managers.

Classroom teachers and education support staff have little control over what we teach, how we teach, for how long we teach and how we assess. We are forced in many cases to write curriculum standards on the wall, teach with “fidelity” lesson by lesson, page by page — and keep pace with our colleagues. Our workloads have increased, services have been cut and programs have been outsourced — all

without even minimal consultation. We are being forced to do more with less, often at stagnant wages. There is no democracy in this model.

Building union democracy in classrooms and at worksites

We *can* and we *must* reclaim democracy in our classrooms and at our worksites. We do this by democratizing our union. Members want to belong to a union in which their struggles are central and where leaders support them in their fight to improve their working conditions and their students’ learning conditions.

Building that “culture of control by the members” begins by coming together to listen to one another, collectively name the problems we face, and determine the direction and the action to solve our own problems, rather than having other people solve our problems for us. When we start to talk to each other about how we can make conditions better, we begin to imagine that something else is possible, and then we resist.

We reclaim democracy in our classrooms when we build democracy in our union. I believe that we will get there, as I see educators — who for so long had been feeling too afraid to do something — now beginning to take action because they are *more* afraid of doing nothing.

Letters policy

MTA Today welcomes letters to the editor from MTA members. Letters should be no longer than 200 words. Each letter submitted for publication must address a topic covered in *MTA Today*, must be signed and must include the writer’s telephone number for confirmation purposes. Opinions must be clearly identified as belonging to the letter-writer. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity and style. To submit a letter, mail it to *MTA Today*, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, or e-mail it to mtatodayletters@massteacher.org. For additional information, please refer to the guidelines posted on www.massteacher.org.



Supporting locked-out workers

The lockout of more than 1,200 National Grid workers continued as *MTA Today* went to press, even as two recent incidents served to demonstrate the need for trained and qualified workers. On Oct. 8, a replacement National Grid worker’s mistake led to a shutdown of service to 300 customers in Woburn and a moratorium on work there pending a safety review. In September, explosions in lines owned by Columbia Gas rocked the Merrimack Valley, leading to one death and the evacuation of neighborhoods in three communities. MTA members have been on the march in support of the locked-out National Grid workers since the summer. On July 18, members marched behind a banner in Boston to show support for their fellow union members.

Photo by Bob Duffy

Program helps ESPs build union skills

By Jean Conley

Another set of MTA ESP Leadership Weekends will soon get underway, responding to education support professionals' demand for more training in that area amid growing attacks on unions.

Interest in the program, which is modeled on the National Education Association's Leaders for Tomorrow effort, spiked in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision last summer in the *Janus v. AFSCME* case. Registration for this year is full, illustrating the high interest in leadership training among ESPs. And participants are looking forward to the sessions.

Joni Cederholm, vice president of the Weymouth Educators' Association and a paraprofessional for 23 years in the Weymouth Public Schools, will be a participant this year. She said she attended post-*Janus* training at the MTA Summer Conference and decided that the leadership weekends would help prepare her for contract negotiations set to begin next fall.

"I want to be prepared," she said. "Ready to go."

Along with professional development and union skills workshops developed specifically for ESPs, the leadership program offers a way for members to become more active in the MTA.

The program will be held over three weekends in November, January and April and cover a wide range of topics that include developing assertiveness, overcoming fear, building confidence in one's ability to lead and strengthening interpersonal skills.

Shaleah Rather, vice president of the Classified Staff Union at UMass Boston and a longtime MTA activist, served as a facilitator in last year's program.

"The camaraderie — meeting other people from other communities, listening to what they are going through and learning from that — helps to motivate you," said paraeducator Janice McKeown.

She will do so again this year. Rather said that she is thrilled at the strides being made by the group of 12 participants who "graduated" at the 2018 Education Support Professionals Conference and that she was especially gratified to see several of those members working on the *All In* initiative this past summer.

The initiative, which focuses on one-to-one conversations between members as a way of building union power, will play an even bigger part in the program this year, Rather said.

The leadership weekends "helped participants foster the leadership skills they needed in order to get out there and knock on doors," she said. "They all talked about the program being a really great experience and said they would not have been active in *All In* conversations over the summer had they not gone through it."

Janice McKeown, a paraeducator at the Runkle School in Brookline, graduated last spring along with two fellow members of the Brookline Educators Union — Roylene Hunte and Wendy MacMillan.

McKeown said she found the experience to be invaluable preparation for the current school year, as her local faces a new set of challenges.

"The camaraderie — meeting other people from other communities, listening to what they are going

through and learning from that — helps to motivate you," she said.

McKeown added that her relationship with MacMillan and Hunte grew significantly during the program.

"You probably wouldn't find three more different people going through the program," she said. "And as an educator, you can feel very alone at times. But now we are comrades-in-arms. We are all at different schools and we have had different life experiences. But the program gave me, Wendy and Roylene a common base to work from."

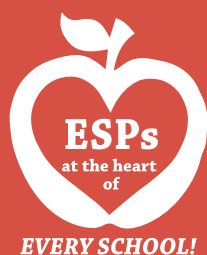
McKeown said she found so much value in the program that she would consider attending a follow-up course.

"You can never have these trainings too often," she added. "Being in the same room with other people who are going through similar situations is just uplifting. It reinforces and supports you and gives you a boost. This program is about self-esteem, speaking up, and exploring your true values. No matter where someone is in their life or career, I think we all benefit from continued practice and growth in these areas."

Despite Cederholm's many years as an activist — before becoming an officer in her local, she was a building representative, a member of the negotiating team and a member of the WEA Executive Board — she looks forward to strengthening her skills.

She also wants to be a model for other up-and-coming members of her association.

"My hope and desire is to show other members how important it is that they become involved. It is important to not be afraid — to have a voice. In numbers, we have strength."



SAVE THE DATES

2019

MTA ESP CONFERENCE



**Sea Crest Beach Hotel
Falmouth**

'Fund Our Future' campaign begins

By Laura Barrett

As MTA President Merrie Najimy likes to say, "In the words of Twisted Sister, 'We're not going to take it anymore!'" The "it" in this case is the chronic underfunding of public education, from prekindergarten through higher education.

Najimy quoted that line at an All Presidents' Meeting on Sept. 15, launching MTA's ambitious campaign named "Fund Our Future: Invest in the Schools and Colleges Our Communities Deserve." More than 200 local leaders attended the meeting, which was held in Newton.

The campaign goal is to win significant new funding in the Legislature for both preK-12 schools and public higher education. For schools, the proposal builds off a plan to update the foundation budget formula that made progress in the Legislature in the last session but ultimately failed to pass.

The formula sets minimum school spending requirements for each district. In 2015, the nonpartisan Foundation Budget Review Commission determined that the formula is woefully out of date, providing too little state aid to cities and towns to meet their constitutional obligation to "cherish" the state's public schools. The current formula underestimates costs in four major areas: educating students who have disabilities, are English learners, or are from low-income families; and providing health insurance to staff.

The MTA-backed plan would address those shortcomings and guarantee all districts new resources. In total, it would provide cities and towns with \$1.1 billion in new Chapter 70 school aid per year once fully phased in.

The MTA proposal also would increase state funding for public colleges and universities by a projected \$574 million a year. That is the level needed to bring state funding back to where it was in 2001, in inflation-adjusted dollars, and is in line with the recommendations made by the Higher Education Finance Commission in 2014.

The MTA will be working on the campaign with the Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance and other groups representing parents, students and other community residents, including many of the same organizations that joined the MTA in defeating Question 2, the charter school expansion ballot initiative, in 2016. "The Fund Our Future campaign is for students, for educators and for our communities," Najimy said. "We must be *all in* with this effort if we are going to win."

MTA locals have already begun to take action. Early steps include asking school committees to pass funding resolutions, distributing leaflets, participating in marches and holding member meetings to envision what could be accomplished for students with additional funds. To guide those conversations, the MTA has simulated how much each district would receive if the MTA-backed proposal is passed and phased in over five years.



In the photo above, Haverhill Education Association members and colleagues from other area locals took to the streets on Sept. 13 to celebrate a one-year contract settlement while also calling for more funding. In the photo at left, educators applauded on Sept. 20 as Springfield Education Association President Maureen Colgan Posner argued for a school funding resolution. The School Committee voted unanimously in favor of the resolution.

Photos by Chris Christo and Laura Barrett

Those projected totals are available on an interactive map on the MTA website.

The numbers cannot be calculated in the same way for public higher education, but all 29 campuses would benefit and student debt would be reduced if state funding were increased by \$574 million a year.

Maureen Colgan Posner, president of the Springfield Education Association, used the figure projected for Springfield – \$94,614,747 – when testifying in support of a school funding resolution on Sept. 20. Dozens of Springfield educators packed the School Committee chamber to cheer her on.

Colgan Posner said it was "incomprehensible" to her that legislators failed to approve the foundation budget bill last spring, which is why educators are now taking the lead in trying to pass a new bill before the end of the school year.

"When you are talking about Springfield, what does \$94 million mean?" she asked.

"Imagine what we could do with that money," she said. "We could have art and music back in all of our schools. We could have foreign languages back in our

middle schools. We could have after-school programs, more special education support, more English learner support, small class sizes, etc. The possibilities are 94-million-dollars-unlimited. We need to demand that this money come back to this community."

To loud applause, the School Committee voted unanimously in favor of the resolution and agreed to send a copy of it to the city's legislative delegation, the speaker of the House, the Senate president and the governor.

Other locals, including the Haverhill Education Association, are incorporating the funding message into contract fights. At a March for Respect on Sept. 13, HEA President Ted Kempinski told the crowd, "The City of Haverhill is failing to provide its children with the resources needed to achieve a 21st-century education. There are no computer teachers in our elementary and middle schools across the city. And there are not enough computers in more than three-quarters of the elementary and middle school classrooms."

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Photos by Eric Haynes

Educators, parents, students and activists marched from Chicopee High School to Dupont Middle School to draw attention to the need for funding.

Chicopee rally highlights funding needs

By Scott McLennan

The Chicopee Education Association had been engaged in a prolonged and sometimes bitter fight to settle a contract when members began organizing a march and rally for this fall to draw attention to the problems caused by a lack of funding for public education.

Throughout the summer, Chicopee educators — who had gone more than a year without a new contract — reached out to families and community leaders about attending a rally on Sept. 22. The event was intended to drive home the point that the city was spending barely above the foundation level — the level that the state determines represents “adequate spending” to meet the needs of students.

The CEA wanted the public to know that many surrounding communities were spending roughly 20 percent above their state-calculated foundation levels and that the formula used to determine adequate spending on education had become grossly outdated.

Then in mid-September, teachers — who comprise the largest unit of the CEA — reached a tentative agreement with the Chicopee School Committee.

So was the rally called off? No way!

“The march and rally were always about more than the contract,” said CEA President Laura Demakis.

Chicopee educators have been out front in their activism about school funding. The CEA was in the first wave of MTA locals asking their school committees to pass resolutions demanding that the state Legislature fully fund public education.

In 2015, the bipartisan Foundation Budget Review Commission determined that public schools in Massachusetts are underfunded by more than \$1 billion annually because of the outdated formula used to determine foundation budgets. In the case of Chicopee, the schools are shorted \$14.5 million annually.

More than 300 educators, parents, children and community leaders turned out for the march, which began at Chicopee High School and proceeded to Dupont Middle School, where a rally was held. MTA President Merrie Najimy and Vice President Max Page joined the event, as did Chicopee School Superintendent Richard Rege and citywide PTO



More than 300 people turned out for a march and rally hosted by the Chicopee Education Association to demand full funding of public education. In the photo at left, CEA member Victoria Ellis participated in the Sept. 22 event. In the photo at right, Springfield teacher Erin Burns was among those from surrounding districts who marched in solidarity.

President Sharon Deragon, both of whom were among the speakers.

The Chicopee action was part of a broader movement that is spreading throughout the area and the state. The MTA has launched a campaign called “Fund Our Future: Invest in the Schools and Colleges Our Communities Deserve” that is gaining steam in Massachusetts towns and cities in advance of the 2019-2020 legislative session.

In the weeks leading up to Sept. 22, members of MTA locals in Western Massachusetts formed a coalition — the Western Mass Educator Action Network, or WeMEAN — to strengthen and assist each other in the funding fight.

WeMEAN members wearing T-shirts from several surrounding locals were well represented at the rally. At tables, people filled out cards describing what they would like to see in their schools if the proper funding were available.

Union members collected the responses, which called for everything from increased staffing to basic school supplies. In the days ahead, CEA members plan to share the information culled from the hundreds of cards with legislators.

During the rally, Demakis fired up the crowd, declaring, “Educators know that we need the

funding, the administration knows that we need the funding, the parents know that we need the funding, and the students know that we need the funding. The only ones who don’t seem to know are the people in charge of the funding!”

She described the lack of services available to meet the social and emotional needs of Chicopee students. She also decried the lack of technology available to students and the shortage of basic curriculum supplies.

She said that based on the current condition of the public schools, the city is not “creating a future — it is creating a road to disaster.”

Superintendent Rege said that he has never before seen such a crisis in education funding in the state, and he predicted that Massachusetts would lose its “best in the country” status within five years if the state continues to underfund public education.

Najimy further inspired the crowd at the rally, saying, “It’s our money, and we’re taking it back.”

She applauded the communitywide effort to advocate for public schools and assured the crowd that Chicopee “deserves excellence.”

“First we raise expectations, then we raise hell, and then we raise the money,” Najimy said.

Retirees 'ready to share' expertise

Gathering features calls to action, help for schools and many workshops

By Scott McLennan

The 2018 MTA Retired Gathering included calls to action on many issues, including fighting for greater education funding, engaging in the November election and serving as a vital link to support union solidarity amid increased attacks on organized labor.

Retired educators from across the state who attended the annual conference responded overwhelmingly, filling out so many *All In* union commitment cards that Jacqueline Gorrie, chair of the MTA Retired Members Committee, looked like she was hoisting a brick when she showed off the stack of pledges.

"We are ready to share our expertise and experience," Gorrie said at the dinner on the first night of the gathering, which took place Sept. 24 and 25 at the Sea Crest Beach Hotel in Falmouth.

Participants were also ready to celebrate and learn.

The event's opening dinner served as the occasion to present Dr. Charles Levenstein with the 2018 Honor Our Own award. Levenstein, a professor emeritus at UMass Lowell, combined research and social justice to forge a career of activism aimed at making schools and other workplaces safe and healthy.

Levenstein, who was nominated for the award by fellow UMass Lowell professor emeritus Craig Slatin, is considered a pioneer in the worker safety and environmental movements. He oversaw the state's Work Environment Justice Fund when it was established in 1994, and he helped assist more than 50 communities with projects supported by the fund.

Levenstein opened his acceptance speech by noting that the union job held by his father allowed him to attend college. He went on to criticize the state's failure to fully fund public education.

"When you talk about the shortfalls in the foundation budget, you're not even talking about building costs related to health and safety," Levenstein said.

The shortfalls in school funding hit home when MTA Executive Director-Treasurer Ann Clarke handed out oversized "checks," made out in the amount that each public school district would receive in additional funding once the foundation budget formula is finally fixed to reflect the true cost of educating students. She welcomed the retirees' activism in the MTA's Fund Our Future campaign, which is aimed at getting the state Legislature to make proper and ongoing investments in public education funding, from prekindergarten through college.

State Senator Julian Cyr (D-Truro), who represents the Cape and Islands District, delivered the evening's keynote address. In introducing him, Retired Members Committee member Julia Monteiro Johnson noted that Cyr was just 16 years old when he took on a student leadership role in a Proposition



In the photo above, MTA retirees enjoyed the comfortable setting of the Sea Crest Beach Hotel, where their annual gathering was held. In the photo at left, from left to right, Dr. Charles Levenstein, Retired Members Committee Chair Jacqueline Gorrie, committee member Julia Monteiro Johnson and state Senator Julian Cyr posed together at the opening night dinner, where Levenstein received the Honor Our Own award and Cyr delivered the keynote address.

Photos by Scott McLennan

2½ override campaign to win increased school funding for Nauset.

Cyr elaborated, explaining that he joined the fight because budget cuts were going to hit the choir program in which he was active in high school, and the job of the choir teacher was going to be cut.

"I got into this work because of a teacher," said Cyr, who held various positions in the field of public health before winning his Senate seat in 2016.

Cyr called the Supreme Judicial Court's decision in June to block the Fair Share Amendment question from the November ballot a "wrenching disappointment," but he vowed to stay in the fight for increased funding for public education.

Former MTA President Anne Wass, a member of the Retired Members Committee, added to the discussion by explaining the MTA's support for Ballot Question 3, which keeps legal protections in Massachusetts in place for those who identify as transgender, and Ballot Question 1, aimed at ensuring safe staffing levels for nurses working in hospitals.

Both days of the gathering featured a wide assortment of workshops covering topics ranging from financial planning to popular works of art. Giveaways of prizes supplied by MTA Benefits also enlivened the event.

Please turn to **MTA retirees**/Page [23](#)

MTA launches campaign for public education funding

Continued from Page 6

Referring to the heat wave at the beginning of the school year, Kempinski added, “I was in the Pentucket Lake Elementary School when it was 91 degrees with 66 percent humidity. Even with a teacher-paid-for air conditioner in the room it was still 91 degrees. Those are both student learning conditions and teacher working conditions.”

The march was held in part to celebrate having settled a one-year contract and in part to call for more funding. Even with the recent raise, Haverhill’s teachers will be among the lowest paid in the state, and the turnover rate in the district is one of the highest. One in four teachers leaves the district every year.

Prior to the march, Kempinski had organized a meeting at which he asked local association leaders in the region for their support. In return, he pledged to bring HEA members to their districts if needed. Tewksbury sent a contingent of members. Their blue T-shirts stood out in the sea of red shirts worn by HEA members.

Cathy Bilodeau, former co-president of the Tewksbury Teachers Association, explained why she marched. “We all have been in difficult situations ourselves,” she said. “Teachers support one another no matter what. When a colleague asks for help, we show up.”

#FundOurFuture



Faculty and staff at public higher education campuses have been grappling with funding issues for decades.

Per-student funding for campuses has declined by one-third since 2001 when adjusted for inflation, and scholarships for students have declined by a comparable amount.

As a result, student debt has skyrocketed, staff have been laid off, many full-time faculty members have been replaced by poorly paid adjunct faculty, and some buildings are in poor repair.

These issues are all present at the University of Massachusetts Boston campus, which has been

rocked by funding woes ever since corruption led to shoddy and costly construction work in the 1970s.

Speaking at the All Presidents’ Meeting, Annetta Argyres, president of the Professional Staff Union at UMB, said, “Austerity has been our life.” She talked about the layoff of 100 adjuncts two years ago and additional layoffs this year. The campus-based day care center, used by students and staff alike, has been closed. And the administration is planning to significantly increase parking fees.

“The administration is saying we have to raise fees rather than demanding that the state do what it is supposed to do,” she said. “Our share of \$574 million in new money could go a long way.”

Advocating for funding for higher education will be a continued focus of the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts — PHENOM — which includes college and university students as well as MTA members and other staff.

Speaking about the campaign at the All Presidents’ Meeting, MTA Vice President Max Page paraphrased a famous saying, asking, “If not now, when? If not us, then who?” He then answered his own question. “The MTA represents the community of educators who will make this happen.”

For more information on the campaign, please visit www.massteacher.org/FundOurFuture

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REGIONAL RETIREMENT CONSULTATIONS AVAILABLE

The MTA provides individual retirement consultations throughout the state to assist members. *Proof of membership must be submitted when requesting retirement services. This schedule is in effect from September to June except at MTA’s Quincy headquarters, which is staffed during the summer and school vacations.*

PLEASE NOTE:

All consultations are now by appointment only during the hours listed.

AUBURN — Edward Nelson: first Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Central Office, 48 Sword St., Auburn; 508.791.2121, or at home, 774.239.7823.

QUINCY — Harold Crowley: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 9th Floor, Quincy; 617.878.8240 or 800.392.6175, ext. 8240.

CAPE COD — Lawrence Abbruzzi: second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Barnstable Teachers Association (BTA), 100 West Main St., Suite #7, Hyannis; 508.775.8625, or at home, 508.824.9194.

FITCHBURG — Karen Melanson: second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fitchburg Teachers Association office, 245 River St., Fitchburg. Call 978.355.6963.

HOLYOKE — Ron Lech: third Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Western Office, 55

Bobala Road, Suite 3, Holyoke; 413.537.2335, or at home, 413.893.9173.

LYNNFIELD — Peter Mili: third Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Northeast Office, 50 Salem St., Building B, Lynnfield; call 617.460.6589. Barbara Callaghan: fourth Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Northeast Office, 50 Salem St., Building B, Lynnfield; call 978.456.9997.

PITTSFIELD — Ward F. Johnson: second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Berkshire Office, 188 East St., Pittsfield; 413.499.0257, or at home, 413.443.1722.

RAYNHAM — Raymond Thompson: third Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Southeast Office, 756 Orchard Street, third floor, Raynham. Call Thompson at 617.347.4425.

HIGHER EDUCATION AT-LARGE — Edward McCourt, 781.325.2553.

Note: If your association would like to schedule a retirement workshop at your school, your local president should call Harold Crowley at 800.392.6175, ext. 8240. Please be aware that the MTA consultants do not have records of your service, so members are advised to bring that information along to meetings.

Conference to focus on breaking the cycle of racism

By Jean Conley

“Wake Up! Break the Cycle of Racism” is the theme of this year’s Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee Conference.

The conference will take place at the DoubleTree Bedford Glen Hotel in Bedford on Friday, Dec. 7, and Saturday, Dec. 8.

EMAC Chair Yan Yii said the conference will build on conversations about racism and white privilege that have occurred over the past few years at EMAC conferences, the MTA Summer Conference and various forums.

Yii said the theme of the conference represents an urgent call to action to all MTA members, regardless of whether they have participated in previous discussions.

“Whether or not you are an ethnic minority, it is time that we all woke up and started getting beyond just talking about racism,” she said. “We need to move toward changing the social dynamics that allow racism to continue to exist.”

She added, “When the rights of our students, our families, our neighbors and our friends are being questioned because of the color of their skin, how can we stay silent? How can we allow this behavior to continue?”

The keynote speaker on Friday evening will be former METCO Executive Director Jean McGuire.



In 1973, McGuire took the reins at the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity one year before court-ordered busing began in Boston. She went on to oversee the program, which is aimed at expanding opportunities for students in underfunded school districts and increasing diversity in suburban schools, for the next 43 years.

McGuire is a former teacher and school counselor in the Boston Public Schools. In 1981, she became the first black woman elected to the Boston School Committee. McGuire has a degree in education from Boston State College and a master’s degree from Tufts University. She was named

humanitarian of the year by the Boston Ethical Community in 2004, and she received a lifetime achievement award from Community Change in 2012. She was awarded an honorary doctor of public service degree from Tufts University in 2017.

On Friday evening, participants will also be treated to a performance by classical Indian dancers from the Triveni School of Dance in Brookline. In addition to training dancers, the school is a nonprofit organization dedicated to social awareness and celebrating cultural diversity.

Another highlight of the conference will be a panel discussion on Saturday that will focus on the theme of the conference.

Also on Saturday, morning and afternoon workshops will be held on topics that include creating safe places to break the cycle of racism, developing relationships between educators and students of color, and decolonizing the curriculum.

In the spring, the committee intends to conduct regional forums focused on the state’s history and social science curriculum framework.

“We hope that you will join us at our 39th annual EMAC Conference,” Yii said. “There is much to be discussed, and we can’t break the cycle of racism if we aren’t willing to talk about it.”

Watch for conference registration information at www.massteacher.org/emac

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Charter proposals strongly opposed

By Scott McLennan

Community leaders, educators and elected officials in New Bedford have come out against proposals seeking to more than double the number of charter school seats in the city by expanding two existing charter schools.

While a proposal to create another school, the New Bedford Cheironeum Charter School, was recently rejected by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the two expansion proposals are still on the table.

“It would be devastating to the students in the New Bedford Public Schools if the state approves these expansion plans,” said Louis St. John, president of the New Bedford Educators Association.

New Bedford already loses roughly \$14 million a year to privately run charter schools, which enroll approximately 1,175 students from the city. The proposed expansions would more than double the loss.

Making matters worse, New Bedford, like districts across the state, receives far less than it deserves in Chapter 70 aid from the state. New Bedford schools would receive \$40 million more per

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell is among the officials who have voiced opposition to expanding charter enrollment in the city.

year if the formula used to calculate appropriate state investment in public education were updated to reflect the recommendations of a bipartisan commission.

Alma del Mar Charter School, which currently enrolls 413 students in kindergarten through eighth grade, wants to increase that number by 1,188 students. The Global Learning Charter Public School, with 500 students in grades five to 12, wants to add another 100 seats. Its expansion plans have been denied twice before.

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell is among the officials who have voiced opposition to expanding charter enrollment in the city. The School Committee voted unanimously to oppose a charter expansion in August, and as *MTA Today* went to press, the City Council had a similar recommendation under review.

City officials opposed to the charter school expansion have said that adding the proposed charter school seats would be too big a blow to the city’s school budget and noted that the state does not fully reimburse districts for the money owed to them to offset the public funds sent to privately run charter schools.

Under state guidelines, New Bedford can increase the number of charter school seats allowed in the city by 1,225. The community has no formal say in approving new charter schools or expansions proposed by existing schools.

The state received three proposals for new charter schools — including Cheironeum’s — and five requests for expansions.

The DESE invited full applications for the other two new charter schools: the Equity Lab Charter School, which would impact Lawrence, Haverhill and Methuen, and a Montessori school in Haverhill.

In targeting New Bedford with three proposals, charter proponents — with strong support from the right-wing Pioneer Institute — were taking on a community that had voted 58 percent to 42 percent

Please turn to **Charter**/Page 26

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Locals are *All In* for fight against union-busters

Continued from Page 2

towns and unions to defend the rights and interests of all working people.”

In the case of Everett, that solidarity has manifested itself in creative ways. Members of nearby local associations were outraged when they learned through social media about an incident outside the Parlin School on Sept. 25. Kim Auger, president of the Everett Teachers Association, had invited Najimy and MTA Vice President Max Page to share coffee and doughnuts with Parlin teachers on their way into school. The idea was to give the beleaguered members a chance to share their concerns with the union, and for the union to show it has their backs.

Before long, three Everett police officers arrived and told the union leaders that the school administration had claimed they were picketing — which was obviously false — and that they had to disperse. Najimy posted the story on social media and in short order, union leaders in Burlington and elsewhere organized their own coffee-fueled conversations with members and posted images declaring their solidarity with Everett’s teachers.

While the *Janus v. AFSCME* U.S. Supreme Court decision handed down on June 27 was a test for public-sector unions, the Everett story is one example of how the MTA has remained strong.

In the *Janus* case, the court upended a 41-year-old precedent and ruled 5-4 that unions can no longer charge nonmembers an agency fee to offset the costs of bargaining and maintaining the contracts under which they work.

Anticipating that ruling, the MTA and other public-sector unions braced for the possibility that a significant number of members — especially newcomers — might be persuaded to save a few dollars in dues by dropping their membership. MTA administrative staff were trained in how to respond to drop requests. But the deluge never arrived. As of mid-October, only a handful of MTA’s 110,000 members had dropped their membership. It’s as if a big storm was forecast and sandbags had been piled high, but the storm blew out to sea.

The MTA is taking nothing for granted, however.



MTA members are finding many ways to express their sense of solidarity, which has been growing even stronger since the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Janus* decision. In the photo above, MTA President Merrie Najimy spoke to protesters outside an event held by the anti-union Pioneer Institute on Sept. 24. In the photo at left, a crowd gathered at the Everett School Committee meeting on Oct. 1 to support the city’s teachers.

Photos by Jean Conley and Sarah Nathan

The *All In* experience has reinforced the philosophy that members, local leaders and staff must have ongoing conversations with one another about what they want from their union and how to accomplish their goals.

During the school year, locals are building on efforts begun over the summer by 84 summer member-organizers working with preK-12 locals and another 18 with public higher education members.

Gary A. Maestas, a summer organizer and middle school science teacher in New Bedford, explained why he was drawn to the mission.

“Public employees, especially educators, need unions,” he said. “The collective bargaining agreement is central to our existence as educators. It’s about so much more than how much we are paid. It’s about how long you have to prepare for your classes and how much time you are given to eat lunch. It’s everything.”


“Our union is strong and getting stronger,” said Page. “All of the conversations we’ve been having in our locals have helped a lot. Even more, members become committed when they take part in actions — when they stand up for themselves and their students.”

The corporate interests behind the anti-union efforts must be disappointed. They have spent a small fortune sending propaganda to union members in states across the country, including Massachusetts.

One group behind this outreach is the Mackinac Center in Michigan, a pro-privatization organization that receives substantial funds from the family of U.S. Education Secretary Betsy DeVos.

The day after the *Janus* decision was handed down, the Mackinac Center flooded the inboxes of MTA members’ school e-mails. Many never reached their targets because they were caught by district spam

Continued on [next page](#)



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Union-busting messages anger members

Continued from [previous page](#)

filters. In any case, school was already out for the year.

The center also mailed letters to the homes of some members. At the MTA's All Presidents' Meeting on Sept. 15, Scott Beaulieu, president of the South Hadley Education Association, showed what he thought of the letter by feeding it into a paper shredder.

Other members cut up their letters, wrote a message that they are "sticking with the union" on a piece of paper, and mailed the whole mess to the MTA.

Why? Because some of the letters came with postage-paid envelopes, so it seemed fitting that Mackinac should have to pay for a pro-union mailing. "If anything, the letters and

e-mails just angered our members," said Najimy. "They understand that unions are the force needed to stop the privatization of public education, to prevent scam colleges like Trump University from operating with impunity and to compel the wealthy to pay their fair share of taxes that fund public schools and services for all of us."



SHEA President Scott Beaulieu takes care of a Mackinac message.

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Nomination papers available

MTA members who intend to seek election to MTA office at the 2019 Annual Meeting of Delegates or to run for NEA Director or Alternate NEA Director may now request nomination papers.

Annual Meeting elections will take place in May for four Executive Committee seats, 13 District Director seats on the MTA Board and two Statewide Retired District seats on the Board.

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected.

There are also two NEA Director seats and six Alternate NEA Director seats up for election. Online voting instructions will be sent to the membership in March.

Requests for nomination papers for MTA office must be submitted in writing to the office of the Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, or by e-mailing MTAGovernance@massteacher.org.

Although there is no deadline for requesting them, nomination papers for MTA office must be filed with the Executive Director-Treasurer by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 1, 2019, regardless of postmark.

Nomination papers for the NEA Director posts may be requested in the same manner, but must be filed no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 11, 2019.

No person may be a candidate for more than one office. Each candidate must specify the office sought, the term of the office, his or her MTA individual membership ID number (which can be found on the MTA membership card), home and school addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses and local association affiliation.

All candidates must comply with the nomination and election provisions of the MTA Bylaws and policies, which will be made available to candidates.

Regional Executive Committee members*: There will be four seats up for election for Regional Executive Committee positions. The seats are for Regions B, D, E, and H and have three-year terms. A candidate must be an active MTA member** and must

TIMELINE	
NOMINATION DEADLINE - DECEMBER 28	
Candidate Recommendation Committee	• Congressional Districts 1, 3, 5 and 7
NOMINATION DEADLINE - JANUARY 11	
MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates	• Regional Ethnic Minority Delegates • Statewide Retired District Delegates
NEA RA (Representative Assembly)	• Statewide, Regional and Retired Delegates
NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors	
AMENDMENT DEADLINE - JANUARY 11	
Filing Deadline for Proposed Bylaw Amendments	
Initial Deadline for Proposed Standing Rules and Resolutions Amendments	
NOMINATION DEADLINE - MARCH 1	
Executive Committee	• Regions B, D, E, and H
Board of Directors	• Districts 33C, 36C, 41C, 39E, 40E, 12F, 13F, 16G, 17G, 20G, 45H, 48H and 49H • Statewide Retired District Directors (2 Seats)
Retired Members Committee	
NOMINATION DEADLINE - APRIL 12	
NEA RA Student Delegates	

be employed in education within the electoral region in which the candidate seeks office. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 100 active members from the candidate's region, with no more than 25 from any one local affiliate.

District Directors — MTA Board*: The terms for the 13 District Director seats will be for three years. The open districts are 33C, 36C, 41C,

39E, 40E, 12F, 13F, 16G, 17G, 20G, 45H, 48H and 49H. Each candidate must be an active MTA member** and must be employed in education within the electoral district in which the candidate seeks office. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 50 active members from the candidate's district.

Statewide Retired District Directors*: There will be two

Statewide Retired District Director seats up for election on the Board. The terms last for three years. Candidates must be members of the Statewide Retired District. Candidates may self-nominate by submitting a letter to the office of the Executive Director-Treasurer, which must be received by 5 p.m. on March 1, 2019.

NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors*: Two NEA Director seats will be filled by vote of the active members in March and April, in tandem with NEA statewide and regional delegate elections. The term for each is three years beginning Sept. 1, 2019, and expiring Aug. 31, 2022, in accordance with the NEA's fiscal year. Vacancies for six Alternate NEA Director seats will also be filled. Each candidate must be an active NEA member**, as determined by the NEA Constitution and Bylaws, for at least two years immediately preceding the election. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 200 active members, with no more than 50 from any one local affiliate and no more than 100 from any one electoral district. The policy on eligibility and procedure for the direct election of NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors is available upon request.

For information on nominations and elections, please contact John Connelly of the MTA Division of Governance and Administration by calling 617.878.8305 or e-mailing jconnelly@massteacher.org.

*In accordance with Article IX, Section 2B, of the MTA Bylaws, all members of the Board of Directors (including officers; Regional Executive Committee members; the Statewide Retired Region Executive Committee member; the At-Large ESP member; District, Statewide, and At-Large Directors; and NEA Directors) will be delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates. Election as delegates will occur simultaneous to, and by virtue of, election to the above-named offices.

**RIF'd members and members who have been granted leaves of absence by their employers may be considered active members employed in education.

2019 NOMINATIONS

THIS SELF-NOMINATION FORM IS ALSO AVAILABLE AT MASSTEACHER.ORG/NOMFORM. THE FORM CAN BE USED FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

Delegates to the NEA RA • Regional Ethnic Minority Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting • Statewide Retired District Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting

WE ENCOURAGE CANDIDATES TO UTILIZE THE ONLINE FORM (or this paper form may be submitted).

A candidate must file a nomination form with the Executive Director-Treasurer by 5 p.m. on Friday, January 11, 2019, regardless of postmark.

NAME OF CANDIDATE: _____

MEMBER ID #: _____

E-MAIL: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

WORK E-MAIL: _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

WORK PHONE: _____

LOCAL ASSOCIATION (leave blank if retired): _____

DISTRICT/REGION/RETIRED: _____

PLEASE CHECK THE BOX TO INDICATE THE ELECTED POSITION YOU ARE SEEKING

CANDIDATE MUST FILL OUT A SEPARATE NOMINATION FORM FOR EACH POSITION SOUGHT. Please check one box only.

- Retired Delegate to MTA Annual Meeting
- Regional Ethnic Minority Delegate to MTA Annual Meeting*
- Regional Delegate to NEA RA
- Statewide, Non-Supervisor Delegate to NEA RA
- Statewide, Supervisor Delegate to NEA RA
- Retired Delegate to NEA RA

Position/Membership Status

- Teacher or Education Support Professional
- Administrator or Supervisor
- Retired Member

*Candidates for Regional Ethnic Minority Delegate to Annual Meeting, please indicate your ethnic minority designation:

- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Cape Verdean

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **MTA Policy:** Each candidate may submit by the deadline a headshot photograph and biography/ statement containing no more than 50 words. Note: Only the first 50 words will be printed. *The Credentials and Ballot Committee reserves the right to edit all bios.*
2. Write out your statement on a separate piece of paper first, and then fill out the grid.
3. Type or print clearly, using both upper- and lower-case letters, as you expect the final statement to appear.
4. Insert only one word per box.
5. Do not combine words or numbers with hyphens or slashes.
6. “An,” “a” and “the” constitute one word.
7. Abbreviations such as “NEA-RA” and “MTA” count as one word.
8. Insert punctuation in the same box immediately after the word that you want it to follow.
9. A date represented as “October 1, 2018” shall constitute three words. The same date represented as “10/1/18” is only one word.
10. Send this entire nomination form and photo to: MTA Governance and Administration Division, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119. Only submissions received by January 11, 2019, will be published with the ballot. A photo the MTA has used within 2 years may be reused.

BIO/STATEMENT GRID — PLEASE PRINT — OR UTILIZE THE ONLINE FORM AT MASSTEACHER.ORG/NOMFORM

PLEASE SELECT FROM THE FOLLOWING AND CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES:

- 50-word (maximum) bio/statement grid enclosed.
- I am not submitting a bio/statement grid.
- I have e-mailed a photo to jconnelly@massteacher.org (high-resolution JPEG – 300 dpi).
- Photo enclosed.
- Use my 2017 or 2018 photo.**
- I am not submitting a photo.

**MTA can only use past photos if published for 2017 or 2018 elections

My qualifications are in accordance with those of the designated position for which I am a candidate:

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

ADDITIONAL FORMS MAY BE REQUESTED OR THIS FORM MAY BE DUPLICATED. FORMS MAY BE FAXED TO JOHN CONNELLY AT 617.570.4908.

Delegates to be elected for NEA RA

Statewide, regional and retired delegates from Massachusetts to the 2019 NEA Representative Assembly will be elected by the membership during February, March and April.

The nomination period for delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 11. Nominees are encouraged to use the self-nomination form available online at massteacher.org/nomform. The form may be submitted electronically. Alternatively, a paper form can be found on Page 16 of this issue of *MTA Today*.

The election period for statewide and regional delegates runs from March 4 through April 26.

Online voting instructions for statewide and regional delegates will be sent to eligible active MTA/NEA members.

For active members, the delegate categories include *regional non-supervisor*, *statewide non-supervisor*, and *statewide other/supervisor*.

The MTA will be notified by the NEA in January of the number of delegates allocated to Massachusetts. The allocation of statewide and regional delegates will be based on electoral regions A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H. A list of local associations by electoral region is available upon request.

The distribution of statewide and regional seats will be voted on by the MTA Board of Directors at its meeting on Feb. 2; candidates will be informed of the final allocation plan and will be given an opportunity to alter the designation for the level they seek to represent.

The election period for retired delegates runs from Feb. 4 through

March 8. Online voting instructions for retired delegates will be sent only to retired and retired life NEA members.

Retired members receive an allocation of RA delegates in proportion to their membership, and candidates for those seats are elected by the retired membership.

Tentative dates for the RA, which will be held in Houston, are July 2 to 7. The statewide, regional and retired delegates from Massachusetts will attend, in addition to delegates elected by local associations.

The Credentials and Ballot Committee has adopted procedures for the election that call for online voting instructions to be sent to each NEA member in Massachusetts. Those who prefer to vote by paper ballot may request one. Voting is by secret ballot, and the election and tabulation are

conducted under the supervision of the Credentials and Ballot Committee.

There will be a \$1,600 travel stipend for statewide, regional, retired and student delegates.

Elected delegates are expected to comply with the accountability requirements set forth by the MTA. Funding will not be provided unless accountability requirements are met.

The policy procedure for the election of MTA Delegates to the RA should be reviewed carefully by anyone considering candidacy.

Inquiries concerning procedures for the nomination and election of NEA delegates may be addressed to John Connelly in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration at 617.878.8305. His fax number is 617.570.4908, and his e-mail address is jconnelly@massteacher.org.

Regional ethnic minority delegates to be chosen

Regional ethnic minority delegates to the 2019 MTA Annual Meeting will be elected by members in each region in March and April in conjunction with NEA delegate/Director elections.

The nomination period for regional ethnic minority delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 11. Nominations are open to all eligible ethnic minority members through a self-nomination process. Nominees are encouraged to use the self-nomination form available online at massteacher.org/nomform. The

form may be submitted electronically. Alternatively, a paper form can be found on Page 16 of this issue of *MTA Today*.

The election period runs from March 4 through April 26. Online voting instructions for regional ethnic minority delegates will be sent to active MTA members. The MTA provides reimbursement of up to \$450 for eligible expenses incurred by each regional ethnic minority delegate to the Annual Meeting.

The allocation of regional ethnic minority delegates is based on MTA

electoral regions and equal to the number of District Directors from each region.

No more than one delegate from each district within a region will be elected, with the exception of 44H, which has three Directors, and 45H, which has two.

There will be 50 seats for regional ethnic minority delegates. All terms will last for one year.

The regional vacancies are: Region A, seven vacancies; Region B, five vacancies; Region C, seven vacancies; Region D, five vacancies;

Region E, five vacancies; Region F, six vacancies; Region G, six vacancies; and Region H, nine vacancies. Each candidate must be employed in education within the region in which the candidate seeks office.

Inquiries regarding procedures may be directed to John Connelly in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration at 617.878.8305. His e-mail address is jconnelly@massteacher.org, and his fax number is 617.570.4908.

Bylaws and Rules Committee now accepting proposals

The MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee will soon begin reviewing proposed amendments. A proposal to amend the Bylaws addresses the governance of the association or the primary characteristics and functions of the MTA. A proposal to amend the Standing Rules addresses the procedures of the Annual Meeting of Delegates, nominations and elections or governance documents.

Filing process and deadline:

Proposed changes to the Bylaws must be received in writing by the MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee by 5 p.m. on Jan. 11.

Proposed changes to the Standing Rules only may be submitted in writing to the MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee up to the opening of the first business session of the May 3-4 Annual Meeting in Boston. However, early submission by the Jan. 11 deadline

provides an opportunity for a full hearing by the committee, consideration by the MTA Board and presentation at the April pre-convention meetings.

It also allows advance publication in the Spring issue of *MTA Today*.

Submitters will be informed of hearing dates and will be expected to meet with the committee to discuss the language and intent of their proposals.

Proper format: Please use the following format for each proposed

amendment. A template is available from the MTA Division of Governance and Administration upon request.

1. Specifically cite all articles, sections and lines of the Bylaws or Standing Rules that are to be changed or affected.

2. Set forth your proposal in two columns, comparing the proposed text opposite the present text. In the proposed language, underline

Please turn to **Guidelines**/Page 19

MTA Resolutions Committee accepting proposals

Proposed revisions to MTA Resolutions are now being accepted. Resolutions are the organization's statements of principle on issues relating to members, public education, the welfare of students and human and civil rights.

A proposal for a new resolution or revision of an existing one may be submitted by any member. The initial deadline for submissions to the Resolutions Committee is Friday, Jan. 11. Proposed resolutions may also be submitted prior to the end of business

on Friday, May 3, at the Annual Meeting of Delegates. The committee may also propose resolutions. All resolutions submitted are considered by the Resolutions Committee, and those submitted by the January deadline are also brought before the Board of Directors.

To become the official position of the MTA, a resolution must be adopted by the delegates to the Annual Meeting.

For a copy of the current MTA Resolutions, please visit massteacher.org/resolutions.

Nominations sought for Candidate Recommendation Committee

Nominations are now open for the election of members to the MTA Candidate Recommendation Committee. The committee is responsible for making recommendations to MTA members to support candidates for state and federal office. Elections will be held to fill the following seats on the Candidate Recommendation Committee: one seat each in Congressional Districts 1, 3, 5 and 7. Terms on the committee last for

three years. The committee member must reside in the congressional district to be represented. Any MTA member interested in running for the CRC should obtain the nomination form online at massteacher.org/nomform or contact John Connelly in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration. He can be reached by calling 617.878.8305 or e-mailing jconnelly@massteacher.org. The nomination form and a biographical statement of not more than

100 words must be received by Dec. 28. Those eligible to vote for CRC members are delegates to the past year's MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates who reside in the specified congressional district. Upon request, candidates will be provided with a list of MTA Annual Meeting delegates for the congressional district, along with names and addresses. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections may

be waived and the candidates declared elected to the positions in question. Ballots including the candidates' biographical statements will be sent to the electorate on the first Friday in February (Feb. 1) and must be returned no later than 5 p.m. on the last Friday in February (Feb. 22). The CRC terms will begin on March 15, 2019. Members are eligible to be elected for two consecutive three-year terms. In no event can a person hold one of these positions for more than six consecutive years.

Election process starts for Statewide Retired District delegates

MTA Statewide Retired District delegates to the 2019 MTA Annual Meeting will be elected in conjunction with the NEA RA retired delegate elections. The nomination period for Statewide Retired District delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 11. Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process.

Nominees are encouraged to use the self-nomination form available online at massteacher.org/nomform. The form may be submitted electronically. Alternatively, a paper form can be found on Page 16 of this issue of *MTA Today*. The election period will run from Feb. 4 through March 8. Online voting instructions for statewide retired delegates will be sent

to retired MTA/NEA members. Those who prefer to vote by paper ballot may request one. The MTA provides reimbursement of up to \$450 for eligible expenses incurred by each Statewide Retired District delegate to the Annual Meeting. The 2019 allocation of Statewide Retired District delegates will be based on the number of MTA/NEA retired members from the Statewide Retired

District on record no later than Jan. 15. Terms will last one year. The policy procedure for the election will be sent to any candidate who requests a copy. *Inquiries may be directed to John Connelly in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration at 617.878.8305. They may also be e-mailed to jconnelly@massteacher.org or faxed to 617.590.4908.*

2019 HCR AWARD NOMINATIONS



The MTA Human Relations Committee is soliciting nominations for the 2019 MTA Human and Civil Rights Awards, which honor individuals and groups that have shown extraordinary dedication to civil rights and human relations.

The awards will be presented on Friday, June 14, at the 37th annual Human and Civil Rights Awards celebration at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Boston-Westborough.

For further information, please e-mail Mary Gilgallon, director of the Division of Governance and Administration, at mgilgallon@massteacher.org.

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 1, 2019
Forms are available at massteacher.org/hcr



MTA ESP honored for school garden advocacy

Education Support Professional Nancy Burke was recognized with a "Kale Blazer" award at the State House on Oct. 3, Massachusetts Farm to School Awareness Day. The Haverhill Education Association activist, pictured with ESP Committee Chair Leslie Marsland, left, is a nationally recognized advocate for school gardens as teaching tools. "It all started at an MTA professional development workshop and it just took off from there," the former MTA ESP of the Year told the crowd gathered for the event. Others recognized with Kale Blazer awards were Representative Stephen Kulik and Lara Lepionka, executive director of Backyard Growers of Gloucester. While at the State House, representatives of Massachusetts Farm to School advocated for increased funding to help more schools establish gardens. Visit massfarmtoschool.org or e-mail Simca Horwitz at simca@massfarmtoschool.org for more information about getting involved in the school gardening movement.

Photo by Bob Duffy

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

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a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	79,896	79,209
b. Legitimate Paid and/or Requested Distribution	78,992	78,446
1. Outside County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions	N.A.	N.A.
2. In-County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions	N.A.	N.A.
3. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Etc., Outside USPS	N.A.	N.A.
4. Requested Copies Dist. by Other Mail Classes Through USPS	N.A.	N.A.
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	78,992	78,446
d. Nonrequested Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	618	518
1. Outside County Nonrequested Copies, Including Samples	N.A.	N.A.
2. In-County Nonrequested Copies	N.A.	N.A.
3. Nonrequested Copies Dist. Through USPS by Other Mail Classes	N.A.	N.A.
4. Nonrequested Copies Distributed Outside the Mail	N.A.	N.A.
e. Total Nonrequested Distribution	618	518
f. Total Distribution	79,610	78,964
g. Copies Not Distributed	286	245
h. Total	79,896	79,209
i. Percent Paid	99.22%	99.34%

16. Electronic Copy Circulation

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Previous 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Requested and Paid Electronic Copies	28,673	33,666
b. Total Requested and Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Requested/Paid Print Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	107,665	112,112
c. Total Requested Copy Distribution (Line 15f) + Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	108,283	112,630
d. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Both Print & Electronic Copies)	99.43%	99.54%

I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are legitimate requests or paid copies.

17. The Statement of Ownership will be printed in the Fall 2018 issue of this publication.

18. James P. Sacks, Editor

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

MTA GOVERNANCE POSTINGS 2019

Retired committee has four seats open

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected by Statewide Retired District delegates to the 2019 MTA Annual Meeting in May.

Go to massteacher.org/nomform

or see the November/December issue of the *MTA Reporter* for details and the self-nomination form for these positions. The deadline for nominations is March 1, 2019. Terms last two years and begin on July 1.

Guidelines for Bylaws and Rules amendments

Continued from Page L7 amended or added language. Enclose in parentheses language to be deleted. Indicate the location of completely new language.

3. Accompany each proposed amendment with a written rationale on its purpose, impact and intent.

4. Include at the end of all proposals the submitter's name and local association information.

5. Provide your full name, address, telephone number(s), e-mail address and your MTA membership ID number, which can be found on your MTA membership card.

Who may submit proposals?

Individual MTA members, groups of members and local associations are eligible to submit proposed amendments to the MTA Bylaws and Standing Rules.

Members wishing to use an official title representing an MTA affiliate or committee are required to

submit evidence that a vote was taken by authorized representatives of the affiliate or the committee.

Current document: A copy of the current document containing the MTA Bylaws, Standing Rules and Resolutions is available to any member upon request.

Assistance: The Bylaws and Rules Committee and members of the MTA staff are available to discuss ideas for potential amendments and to provide technical assistance.

Inquiries and proposals submitted to the Bylaws and Rules Committee should be channeled through Mary Gilgallon, MTA Director of Governance and Administration. Her mailing address is MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119. Her phone number is 617.878.8213, her fax number is 617.570.4908, and her e-mail address is mgilgallon@massteacher.org.

Election waiver

If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the positions in question.

Conquer the holidays while staying on budget

The holiday season is meant to be a time of celebration, but it can be overshadowed by financial strain. Access to Savings, MTA Benefits' nationwide discount partner, provides a variety of opportunities to help you stay within your budget so you can focus on the joy of the season.

The program allows members to save online and in stores with a printed coupon or on the go with mobile coupons accessed through the My Deals app.

Online shopping during the holiday season has continued to grow more popular with consumers. Mobile purchases are also on the rise. You'll find an abundance of online shopping discounts when you use the Access to Savings program.

Toys make a great gift. But how frequently do you find that they are used for a short time and then forgotten? Bookroo is a children's subscription book club that reinforces a little one's love of reading. Membership options include month-to-month or prepaid three-, six-, or 12-month subscription boxes. You can choose from board books, picture books or chapter books, and you'll save 50 percent off your first box!

Shopping for jokesters? Get them BeanBoozled® Jelly Beans from Jelly Belly, where the only way to determine whether the flavor is birthday cake or dirty dishwasher is to taste it! Throw in some Krispy Kreme® Jelly Beans to help them get rid of the rotten taste. You'll save 15 percent on a \$35 online purchase.

If your gift recipient is a chocolate lover, Ghirardelli would be a great choice. Save 20 percent when you spend \$50 and stock up on gift baskets, brownie mix and melting bars.

If you're looking for a one-stop shop, Cost Plus World Market might be just the right place for you. You'll find furniture, home décor, international cuisine, apparel, stationery and much more — and you'll receive a 12 percent discount when you purchase online.

Gift cards are another gift-giving favorite during the holidays. You can purchase e-Gift Cards online and have them sent to your inbox quickly.



Using the Access to Savings program, you'll save \$5 off a \$50 e-Gift Card to a number of restaurants, including LongHorn Steakhouse, Seasons 52, Olive Garden and The Capital Grille.

SpaFinder offers a 10 percent discount off a \$100 purchase so that your recipient can enjoy a relaxing day at the spa of his or her choice.

Movie buffs, for their part, can save up to 30 percent when purchasing tickets online and printing them at home from AMC Theatres, Cinemark and Regal. AMC also offers a mail delivery option for AMC Black Tickets.

Many of us still prefer an old-fashioned trip to the store. Not to worry — there are plenty of in-store discounts!

Neiman Marcus Last Call has apparel, shoes, fragrances and more from the best designers at incredible prices. Save 40 percent off one regularly priced item in the store.

A coffee aficionado will appreciate a gift of Lavazza, known as "Italy's favorite espresso." Print the coupon online to save \$3 on any one product.

Outlet discounts are available, too. Save \$15 off \$100 at Calvin Klein outlet stores, and a 10 percent discount is available at Naturalizer outlets.

These are just a few of the more than 350,000 discounts Access has to offer.

Visit www.mtabenefits.com for a full list of discounts and redemption guidelines.

Buy now and pay later at zero percent interest

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Zebit offers a great way to shop during the holiday season. Rather than buying gifts with a credit card or paying for them all at once, you can use Zebit to pay a little today and the rest over time — all at 0 percent interest. This is a smart and affordable way to buy gifts, home décor, furniture, electronics and more.

In November, Zebit will offer a Black Friday and Cyber Monday weekend sale on selected products. Watch for huge savings on top brands such as Apple, Samsung, Xbox and Coach.

Zebit also offers e-Gift Cards from retailers including Macy's, Old Navy, Foot Locker and Hotels.com. The cards are typically delivered to your inbox within four hours. So pay just a little today and the rest over time — and shop at dozens of retailers.

Zebit does not charge a membership fee, and there is no credit score needed to join.

Register now to access up to \$2,500 in interest-free credit and start shopping right away at www.zebit.com/mta.

'One Job Should Be Enough'

MTA President Merrie Najimy and MTA Vice President Max Page were part of a large group of supporters walking the picket line with striking workers outside the Westin Boston Waterfront on Oct. 10. As *MTA Today* went to press, more than 1,500 hospitality workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 26, were on strike at seven Marriott hotels. In September, 96 percent of Local 26 workers voted to strike against the biggest hotel employer in Boston after Marriott failed to meet workers' modest demand that "One Job Should Be Enough."

Photo by Bob Duffy





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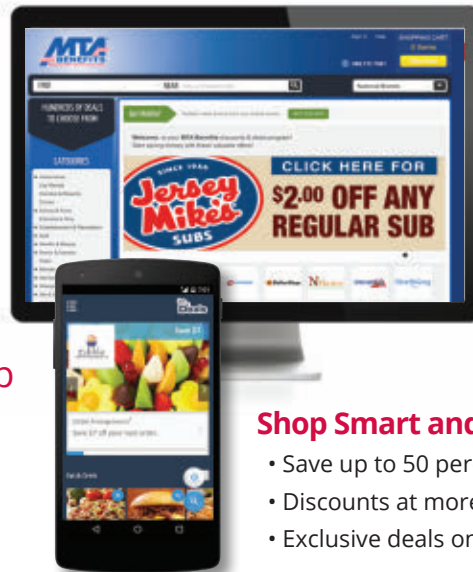
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Purchase	Frequency	Typical Savings per Purchase	Purchases per Year	Yearly Savings
FOOD				
Grocery Store Coupons	5 items per week	\$1.00	36	\$180.00
Dining – Lunch	1 meal/week	\$3.25	52	\$169.00
Dining – Dinner	2 meals/month	\$7.50	24	\$180.00
Pizza	2 purchases/month	\$8.00	24	\$192.00
EVERYDAY NEEDS & SERVICES				
Apparel	8 items per year	\$15.50	8	\$124.00
Home Improvement	2 purchases/yr	\$50.00	2	\$100.00
Carpet Cleaning	1 purchase/yr	\$20.00	1	\$20.00
Misc. Shopping	8 purchases/yr	\$9.00	8	\$72.00
Flowers/Gifts	2 purchases/yr	\$4.50	2	\$9.00
Oil Changes	5 oil changes/yr	\$8.00	5	\$40.00
ENTERTAINMENT				
Bowling/Lasertag/Mini-golf	4 purchases/yr	\$5.50	4	\$22.00
Theme Park Visits	4 passes/yr	\$15.00	4	\$60.00
Concert/Sports/Event Tickets	4 tickets/yr	\$19.00	4	\$76.00
Golf	4 rounds/yr	\$8.00	4	\$32.00
TRAVEL				
Hotel Stays	7 nights/yr	\$28.00	7	\$196.00
Car Rental	5 days/yr	\$14.00	5	\$70.00
Cruise	1 cruise for two/yr	\$35.00	2	\$70.00
TOTAL SAVINGS				\$1,612.00

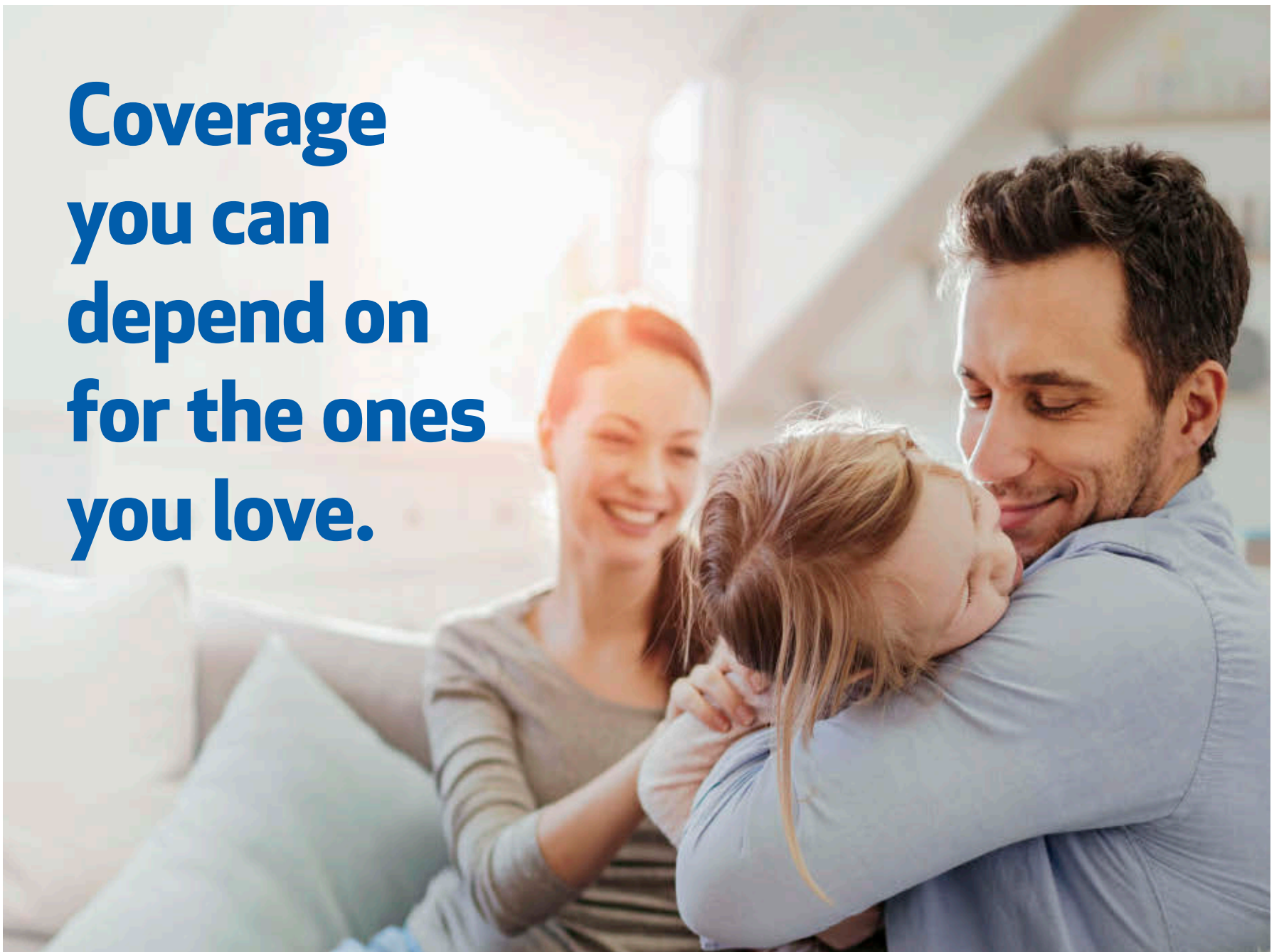
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MTA retirees donate classroom supplies for Wareham

Continued from Page 8

The retirees themselves gave generously in the form of donations collected for the Wareham Public Schools.

Tables were piled high with pencil sharpeners, markers, notebooks, boxes of tissues, rolls of paper towels and other classroom supplies that the retirees brought with them to the gathering.

Wareham Education Association President Deanna Semple was both overwhelmed by and thankful for the donations.

It is not surprising, however, to see MTA retirees still making important contributions to public education and students.

“You built these public schools. Thank you for the schools I inherited from you,” MTA President Merrie Najimy told the crowd on Sept. 25. “Your passion, your love for your

students and your professionalism built the schools.”

Attacks on unions continue on many levels, she noted. For example, before arriving at the gathering, Najimy and MTA Vice President Max Page met for coffee and doughnuts with Everett Teachers Association members outside the Parlin School — and the group of educators was told to disperse by Everett police. The police had been called by school administrators.

Najimy further detailed ongoing attempts by wealthy, conservative organizations to privatize public education and weaken unions.

“We need you to be part of the movement,” Najimy said. “You have the ability to tell people what schools were like when you were teaching and how that is different from what schools are like now. You can say without fear of retaliation what public education can be again.”



Photo by Scott McLennan

Retired Members Committee member Beth Stafford reads off the list of classroom supplies that retirees brought to the gathering to be donated to the Wareham Public Schools. The donations were given to Wareham Education Association President Deanna Semple, right.



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- Greece
FEBRUARY 16 – 24
- Florence, Venice and Rome
APRIL 12 – 20



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Obituaries

Richard W. Brosnihan, 85, of Holden. Was a longtime consultant for the Massachusetts Teachers Association before he retired. Aug. 7.

Pamela S. Campolieto, 72, of Dennis. Taught fifth grade at the Varnum Brook Middle School in Pepperell for 28 years. July 5.

Marie I. Duerden, 82, of Green Valley, Arizona, formerly of Abington. Was a high school English teacher at Abington High School for 36 years, retiring in 1996. June 24.

Norman P. Forest, 93, of Springfield. Taught physics and math at Technical High School and Central High School in the Springfield Public Schools. July 12.

Grace C. Fraser, 90, of East Falmouth. Was an elementary science coordinator and served as the chair of the math and science departments for the Falmouth Public Schools. July 15.

Cornelius F. Gorman, 91, of Springfield. Taught math and social studies at West Springfield Junior High

School for many years. July 8.

Bernice M. McCusker, 87, of Somerset. Taught in the Fall River Public Schools for 24 years. July 16.

Paul V. McLaughlin, 82, of Pelham, New Hampshire. Was a history teacher at Greater Lowell Technical High School in Tyngsborough for many years. He also served on the MTA Board of Directors. Sept. 9.

Catherine Oliveira, 57, of New Bedford. Was a teacher in the New

Bedford Public Schools, most recently at the Normandin Middle School and previously at the Winslow School. Sept. 3.

Gerald J. Poisson, 72, of Westport. Was a teacher for more than 40 years in the Brockton Public Schools. July 12.

Linda A. Powers, 66, of Clinton. Was an elementary and middle school teacher in the Clinton Public Schools for more than 30 years, retiring in 2016. July 16.

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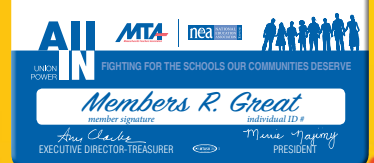


SEPTEMBER 2018 – AUGUST 2019

Benefits & Discount Directory

EVERYDAY SOLUTIONS TO HELP UNION MEMBERS SAVE

2018-2019 MEMBER CARD



Student
loan help
PAGE 6

Restaurant
savings
PAGE 16

50 NEW
discounts
PAGE 27

Classifieds

EMPLOYMENT

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY: Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners — The Board of Bar Examiners (BBE) seeks applications from persons interested in serving as proctors for the bar exam administered in Boston and Springfield when openings occur. Visit www.mass.gov and enter proctor in the search box or e-mail the BBE at info@bbe.state.ma.us.

CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT

IN-SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS — Hands-on Geography (K, 1st and 2nd, Maps and Habitats; 3rd, Maps and Massachusetts Geography; 4th, Map Skills, North America and U.S. Regions). Living History: Colonial School and Meet Eleanor Roosevelt. Please e-mail Carol Cohen at carolcohen173@gmail.com, call her at 508.622.0897 or visit www.carolcohen.com.

TRAVEL/STUDY

STUDY AND TRAVEL INSTITUTE IN BERLIN, GERMANY — April 13-21, Massachusetts school vacation week. Join the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Salem State University for a week in Berlin on the topic of “Teaching the Holocaust.” \$1,959 includes airfare. PDPs or graduate credit available. E-mail Chris Mauriello at

cmauriello@salemstate.edu or call him at 978.542.7129.

SUMMER VACATION

WESTWOOD/DOVER — Already dreaming of summer? The school year just started, but Hale Summer Club has already begun selling next year’s passes! Enjoy time with (or without) the kids swimming, boating, reading, hiking, doing yoga and more. Buy your 2019 Summer Pass by Nov. 26 and save over \$100. Visit <https://halereservation.org>.

VOLUNTEER

TEACH/VOLUNTEER IN CHINA! Sino-American Bridge for Education and Health (SABEH) seeks experienced, creative teachers for summer 2019. All levels and subjects welcome. Visit www.sabeh.org for details and application.

VOLUNTEER ESL TEACHERS — Use skills and talents you have developed in the classroom to empower and educate adult learners in vulnerable populations. A Faith That Does Justice, an ecumenical program that seeks to raise consciousness about social issues, is seeking volunteer ESL teachers. For more information and to apply, see <http://bit.ly/AFTDTeach>.

Charter proposals opposed

Continued from Page L1
to reject Question 2 in 2016. That ballot question, which sought to greatly expand charter schools, was overwhelmingly defeated statewide, 62 percent to 38 percent.

New Bedford resident and UMass Dartmouth education professor Ricardo Rosa, who was active in the Question 2 fight, said he will be working with community partners to push back against the proposed expansions.

Rosa said that making sure people understand that local elected leaders have no control over charter schools — and that charter schools can send students back to the district public schools at any time — is just part of the work that needs to be done.

The other challenge, he said, is making sure that public schools have the resources required to meet every student’s needs. He cited examples from his own daughter’s experience in the New Bedford Public Schools. The librarian in her middle school was let go, and students interested in band had to enter a lottery to see if they could get an instrument. Student athletes

needed to raise funds for their sports programs, and some were made to feel ashamed when they did not raise as much money as others.

“We need a two-pronged effort,” Rosa said. “We need more of a robust transformation in our public schools. In addition to educating the public about what is dangerous about charter schools, we need to establish a dialogue with families about public schools and address their anxieties.”

St. John said that while a charter expansion is never welcome, now is a particularly dangerous time to be taking more resources away from students in the public schools. The threats include possibly having to close a school, raise local property taxes, increase class sizes or cut more services, he said. “The funding crisis plays into the hands of the companies that operate charter schools, allowing them to exploit the austerity our students are forced to live under. This is not right,” St. John said. “Every student deserves the opportunity to thrive. To make that possible, the state needs to fully fund the public schools that welcome every student.”

Be confident in knowing that you're covered.

If you have a family history of cancer, stroke or heart attack, you may have an increased need for this protection.

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- Family members are eligible to obtain coverage.
- The plan includes annual reimbursement for covered health screening.

Specified critical illness insurance is offered to eligible MTA members up to age 69 who are actively at work.

Insurance products underwritten and services offered by the subsidiaries of Unum Group. www.unum.com

Critical Illness Insurance



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Massachusetts Transit Authority
Endorsed Program

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Or call 888.646.1972, ext. 104, to learn more.



Educators
Insurance Agency

has the tools you need to protect your



Benefits for MTA members:

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- Hours that work around your schedule: Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
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Activism leads to progress on contracts

By Scott McLennan

Students, staff and faculty members put the brakes on the fall convocation ceremony at UMass Boston with a robust demonstration against proposed parking fee increases.

While the issue of the fees has not been resolved, the Professional Staff Union has moved closer to setting up a way to bargain over the issue without stalling the rest of its contract agreements, which affect PSU units on the Boston and Amherst campuses.

Activism also helped move the imperiled contract for the Association of Professional Administrators in the right direction. APA President Sherry Horeanopoulos organized a campaign in which both higher education and preK-12 members sent e-mails and made calls to state legislators and Governor Charlie Baker to demand that the state honor a contract that was bargained with the Board of Higher Education and has subsequently been ratified by members.

Baker's Office of Employee Relations had threatened to turn back the contract, claiming that small stipends — received by campus police officers to buy uniforms and APA members who participate in Massachusetts Maritime Academy training cruises — violated financial parameters set out in bargaining.

Horeanopoulos drove home the argument that campuses, which have long covered those costs, should not now look at them otherwise. As *MTA Today* went to press, it appeared that the contract was back on track and headed for legislative funding approval.

"The effort to apply some pressure to get the agreement approved was a collaborative effort among members of the APA and the Massachusetts State College Association initially. And then MTA members in K-12 joined," Horeanopoulos said.

"By far," she added, "the most effective action was undertaken by individual members who spoke out on behalf of their colleagues to members of the Legislature. The feedback from government officials to their constituents was extremely engaging and powerful. Above all, we kept the dialogue positive



Photo by Scott McLennan

Students, staff and faculty at UMass Boston brought their opposition to steep increases in campus parking fees to the Sept. 20 convocation ceremony on the campus.

"The effort to apply some pressure to get the agreement approved was a collaborative effort among members of the APA and the Massachusetts State College Association initially. And then MTA members in K-12 joined," said APA President Sherry Horeanopoulos.

and professional and the interaction ongoing. It was a great effort by all."

The debt crisis at UMass Boston remains a multifaceted problem for students and workers. The state has not assumed responsibility for the cost to repair poor construction that dates back to when the school opened. Instead, administrators have laid off workers and made cuts to academic programs.

A coalition of union members and students has been actively protesting at campus events and

meetings held by the UMass Board of Trustees. But no action has been as boisterous as the one that disrupted the Sept. 20 convocation ceremony, which was attended by UMass president Marty Meehan.

Members of the Classified Staff Union, Professional Staff Union and Faculty Staff Union — along with students — gathered thousands of signatures on a petition opposing the increases in parking fees, which in some cases would double them. The coalition had planned to deliver the petitions to Meehan just before he was scheduled to speak, but campus administrators sought to tamp down the action by removing Meehan from the program.

That only served to exasperate the protesters, many of whom held signs denouncing the parking fee plan and wore red armbands to signify their solidarity. The convocation hall erupted in chants, which effectively stopped the program until students were able to deliver the petitions to Meehan.

As *MTA Today* went to press, the PSU was close to an agreement with UMass to continue bargaining over the parking fee issue while having other contract issues finalized.

2018 General Election Guide



MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!

SUPPORT CANDIDATES WHO WILL
FIGHT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION



MTA
Massachusetts Teachers Association

MTA RECOMMENDS JAY GONZALEZ FOR GOVERNOR

The MTA Board of Directors has voted overwhelmingly to recommend Jay Gonzalez, the Democratic candidate running against incumbent Republican Governor Charlie Baker.

“Jay is a strong supporter of public schools and public higher education,” said MTA President Merrie Najimy. “Unlike Baker, Gonzalez has taken a bold position in favor of raising new revenues through progressive taxes that ask more of our wealthy residents in order to fund the common good, at the core of which are our public schools and colleges.”

Gonzalez wants to raise \$1 billion in the short term to begin investing in public schools, colleges and public transportation. Over the longer run, he wants to raise another \$2 billion from the wealthiest residents of the Commonwealth. Gonzalez was a strong supporter of the Fair Share Amendment, which would have raised a projected \$2 billion a year by increasing taxes on annual incomes over \$1 million.



Jay Gonzalez

Baker declined to commit himself on the Fair Share Amendment. His education secretary actively opposed it, and in June the state Supreme Judicial Court — the majority of whose members were appointed by Baker — blocked the

question from the ballot. Gonzalez said that if elected, he will advocate to have a revised version of that proposal placed on the ballot and will actively support it.

Gonzalez supports public schools over privatized charter schools. He opposed Question 2, the 2016 ballot question to lift the cap. He continues to be against charter school expansion and in favor of keeping the cap and fully funding the charter school reimbursement account. Baker campaigned tirelessly on behalf of charter schools in 2016 and continues to strongly support them.

Concerned about skyrocketing debt among students who attend public colleges and universities, Gonzalez has pledged to support initiatives that would guarantee students a debt-free college education. Baker has not. Gonzalez also supports criminal justice reform, stronger gun safety laws and addressing climate change. He is a strong opponent of President Donald Trump’s anti-immigrant platform.

MTA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATEWIDE OFFICES



ATTORNEY GENERAL
Maura Healey



SECRETARY OF STATE
William Galvin



TREASURER
Deborah Goldberg



AUDITOR
Suzanne Bump

U.S. SENATE and HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES



U.S. SENATE
Elizabeth Warren



2nd CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
James McGovern



3rd CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Lori Trahan



5th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Katherine Clark



9th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
William Keating

STATE SENATE



Michael Brady
(D-Brockton)
2nd Plymouth & Bristol



Sue Chalifoux Zephir
(D-Leominster)
Worcester & Middlesex



Julian Cyr
(D-Truro)
Cape & Islands



Diana DiZoglio
(D-Methuen)
1st Essex



James Eldridge
(D-Acton)
Middlesex & Worcester



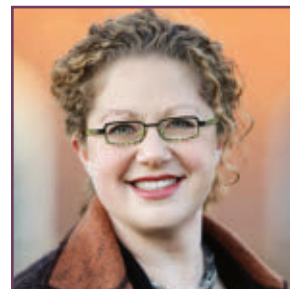
Paul Feeney
(D-Foxborough)
Bristol & Norfolk



Edward Kennedy
(D-Lowell)
1st Middlesex



Jason Lewis
(D-Winchester)
5th Middlesex



Rebecca Rausch
(D-Needham)
Norfolk, Bristol and
Middlesex



MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES



Brian Ashe
(D-Longmeadow)
2nd Hampden



Alex Bezanson
(D-Abington)
7th Plymouth



Antonio Cabral
(D-New Bedford)
13th Bristol



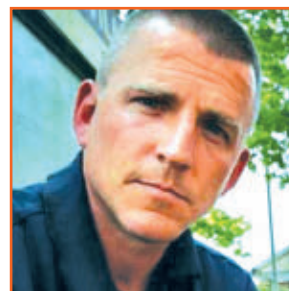
Daniel Carey
(D-Easthampton)
2nd Hampshire



Tackey Chan
(D-Quincy)
2nd Norfolk



Michael Day
(D-Stoneham)
31st Middlesex



Allin Frawley
(D-Middleborough)
12th Bristol



Tami Gouveia
(D-Acton)
14th Middlesex



Richard Haggerty
(D-Woburn)
30th Middlesex



James Hawkins
(D-Attleboro)
2nd Bristol



Stephan Hay
(D-Fitchburg)
3rd Worcester



Natalie Higgins
(D-Leominster)
4th Worcester



MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES



Patrick Kearney
(D-Scituate)
4th Plymouth



Kathleen LaNatra
(D-Kingston)
12th Plymouth



David LeBoeuf
(D-Worcester)
17th Worcester



Patrick Malone
(D-Uxbridge)
8th Worcester



Paul McMurtry
(D-Dedham)
11th Norfolk



Joan Meschino
(D-Hull)
3rd Plymouth



Christina Minicucci
(D-North Andover)
14th Essex



Liz Miranda
(D-Dorchester)
5th Suffolk



MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES



Brian Murray
(D-Milford)
10th Worcester



Tram Nguyen
(D-Andover)
18th Essex



Angelo Puppolo
(D-Springfield)
12th Hampden



David Robertson
(D-Tewksbury)
19th Middlesex



Jennifer Rocco-Runnion
(D-Amesbury)
1st Essex



Jeffrey Roy
(D-Franklin)
10th Norfolk



Timothy Whelan
(R-Brewster)
1st Barnstable



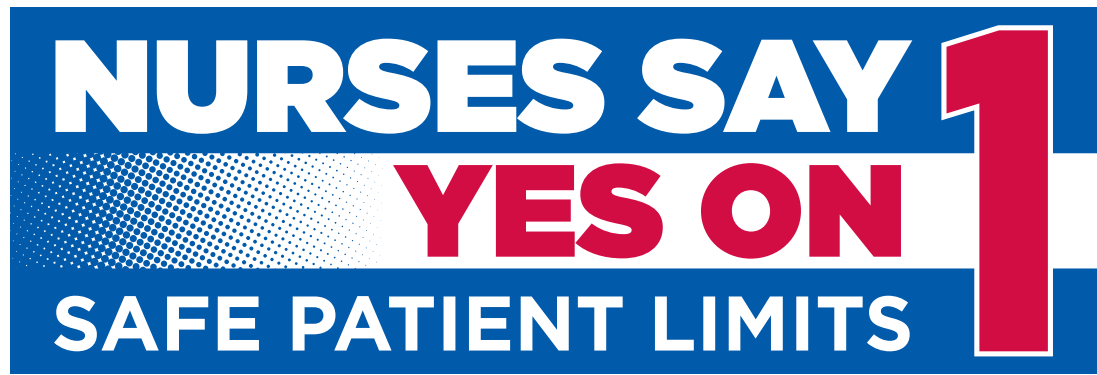
Early voting is an option

Please make every effort to get to the polls on Nov. 6. If you do not plan to vote in person that day, please consider early voting, which begins Oct. 22 and ends Nov. 2.

You may cast your early ballot in person at any early voting location in your city or town during your local election official's regular business hours. Cities and towns may choose to have expanded hours and locations.

A listing of all early voting locations, dates and times can be found at www.MassEarlyVote.com.

BALLOT QUESTION RECOMMENDATIONS



Nurses believe that high nurse-to-patient ratios have led to a public health crisis. For this reason, the bedside nurses who care for our families every day wrote this ballot question. The MTA stands with nurses in recommending Yes on 1.

Passage of Question 1 would create the Patient Safety Act, which would set a safe maximum limit on the number of patients assigned to a nurse at one time. The proposed law provides flexibility to adjust nurses' patient assignments based on specific needs, and it would protect other valuable members of the health care team by preventing a reduction in the number of caregivers who are assigned to patients.

Independent scientific studies have consistently found that the quality of care decreases dramatically when nurses are forced to care for too many patients. This puts patients at greater risk of complications such as pneumonia, bedsores and medication errors.

Eighty-six percent of registered nurses in Massachusetts support Question 1, according to the Massachusetts Nurses Association. The opposition is backed by hospital executives, who have spent \$12 million trying to confuse voters into believing that nurses are divided on this question.



Question 3 asks voters whether they approve of a law passed by the Legislature in 2016 that added gender identity to the list of prohibited grounds for discrimination in “places of public accommodation, resort or amusement.” The MTA recommends a Yes vote on Question 3, which will keep the current law in place.

The MTA believes that the current law makes Massachusetts more welcoming and safe for transgender people; helps prevent discrimination in places such as stores, restaurants and hospitals; helps protect transgender youth and adults; and lets transgender people go about their daily lives without interference.

“Gender identity” is defined as a person’s sincerely held gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not it is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth.

The law prohibits discrimination based on gender identity in a person’s admission to or treatment in any place of public accommodation. The law requires any such place that has separate areas for males and females to allow access to and full use of those areas consistent with a person’s gender identity.

THE MTA Advantage

The MTA Advantage is a publication of MTA Benefits, a subsidiary of the Massachusetts Teachers Association

Student loan forgiveness alert

A recent alert from www.studentaid.ed.gov advises that individuals may still be eligible for loan forgiveness if their applications to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program were denied because some or all payments were not made under a qualifying repayment plan. The U.S. Department of Education is referring to this reconsideration as the Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness opportunity.

Do you qualify?

The temporary opportunity is available only to Direct Loan Program borrowers. Borrowers with loans made under the Federal Family Education Loan Program are not eligible.

To qualify for loan forgiveness under the temporary expanded opportunity, you must have:

- Submitted the PSLF Application for Forgiveness and had that application denied *only* because some or all of your payments were not made under a qualifying repayment plan for PSLF.

- Had at least 10 years of full-time employment certified by a qualifying employer and approved by FedLoan Servicing, the Department of Education's federal loan servicer for the PSLF Program.
- Made 120 qualifying payments under the new requirements for the temporary opportunity while working full time for your qualifying employer or employers.

Talk to the experts

It's often difficult to decipher your federal student debt options. MTA Benefits has partnered with Student Debt Solutions by eFiscal Networks, the Financial Counseling Association of America and the nonprofit debt relief agency Cambridge Credit Counseling to provide you with the tools you need to quickly identify your options. Members may participate in a **free one-hour webinar** on student loan debt education. You'll learn the various loan types, federal repayment plans, income-driven



repayment plans and loan forgiveness options. To sign up for a webinar, log in to mtabenefits.com and visit the Seasonal Offers section. Look under "Student Loan Webinars" for the schedule and sign-up information.

Great deals from T-Mobile

MTA Benefits is celebrating 10 years of partnering with T-Mobile to offer members mobile discounts. Never before have MTA members had so many plan options and such great savings opportunities. There truly is something for everyone.

T-Mobile Amplified™ is the premium plan, offering a discount of 22 percent to 33 percent depending upon the number of lines you choose. The plan includes more unlimited features for everyone:

- Unlimited talk, text and 4G LTE data
- Unlimited HD video streaming
- Unlimited FREE Gogo® in-flight Wi-Fi

T-Mobile's all-inclusive pricing will allow you to say goodbye to bill shock and surprise fees. The price you see is the price you pay:

- 1 line — \$70/month
- 2 lines — \$120/month
- 3 lines — \$140/month
- 4 lines — \$160/month



Customers choosing the Amplified plan also receive Netflix at no additional charge when they sign up for two or more qualifying lines. With the T-Mobile Tuesdays app, customers are thanked every Tuesday with free items and awesome deals.

Unlimited 55+

Unlimited has no age limits! As your household size decreases, your savings should increase. That's exactly what the Unlimited 55+ plan does. Empty nesters 55 and older qualify for two lines for only \$70 per month with autopay.

ONE Military

Veterans, service members and their families receive 50 percent off two to six lines on their account! That means four lines on this plan will only cost you \$100.

Start Saving Now

The MTA member discount is available to both new and existing T-Mobile customers. **These discounts are not available in retail stores.** Call 855.570.9947 and ask for the Massachusetts Teachers Association member discount. Mention promo code **15255TMOFAV**. If you have additional questions, visit mtabenefits.com or e-mail Joanne Pritts, program specialist, at joanne.pritts@t-mobile.com.

New! Emergency medical transportation services



Life is full of the unexpected. We can prepare for many of these events — such as car accidents — by securing an insurance policy that protects us in the event of a loss. It's not as easy to plan for a medical emergency, however. What are your options if a medical emergency occurs when you're in unfamiliar surroundings? And if you're at home, do you know that you'd have to pay for emergency transportation costs that aren't covered by medical insurance? Once you find out what you'd have to pay, do you know how you'd cover the cost?

You may never have thought about these questions, let alone the answers. Here are some facts that will make you think:

- Each year, more than 550,000 people in the United States are flown by medical helicopter or small plane for emergency care, according to the Association of Air Medical Services.
- The average cost of an air ambulance is \$20,000 — and depending on circumstances, the price can rise to \$100,000.
- Only a small percentage of health insurance policies, including Medicare, pay for any part of an air ambulance bill.
- Many travel insurance policies are capped at set dollar amounts and contain exclusions and restrictions that can lead to denial of a claim.

How can you plan for the unexpected? For MTA members, the answer is the Medical Air Services Association. MASA is an international organization with more than one million members that is dedicated to providing lifesaving emergency assistance services for members while they're **at home, on the job, or traveling around the world**. MASA provides members with a supplement to their health insurance coverage, offering financial protection for lifesaving emergency transportation.

Since 1974, MASA has been saving members from significant financial loss when they need emergency assistance for illness or injury. MASA provides:

- Emergency air transportation
- Ground ambulance transportation
- Repatriation/recuperation
- Return transportation
- Escort transportation
- Minor children/grandchildren return
- Vehicle return
- Transport of mortal remains

Health insurance may not cover transportation

The most common claim submitted to MASA is for ground ambulance transport within a 20-mile radius of members' homes. Many people falsely believe their medical coverage will pay for all costs associated with emergency or critical care transport. The reality is that insurance *may* pay up to 80 percent, leaving you responsible for the balance.

MASA members are preapproved for this common occurrence. Insurance companies and Medicare often will not pay for transportation back to your home. Medical insurance coverage depends on the seriousness of your condition and whether you could be safely transported by other means, such as a car or taxi. In addition, if the provider charges more than is allowed under your insurance, you are responsible for the difference.

You're protected 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

In a medical emergency, seconds count. For less than \$1 per day, MASA members can have peace of mind, knowing that lifesaving emergency services are only a phone call away. One low annual membership fee covers all costs for flights and services for an **entire family**. If a member of MASA needs emergency assistance, the services are completely free to the member and MASA pays all of the costs of providing lifesaving medical transportation.

With MASA membership, anyone can be covered

- No health questions
- No age limit
- No claim forms
- No deductibles
- No dollar limit on emergency transport costs

MASA is the only membership company that will cover out-of-pocket expenses resulting from emergency medical transport by any provider without preapproval.



Membership options

Single and family memberships are available for periods of one year, five years and lifetime. MTA members receive a 40 percent discount on membership fees, and the \$60 initiation fee is waived.

- Single membership — \$324/year or \$27/month
- Family membership — \$420/year or \$35/month

Why wait? When seconds count, you can count on MASA.

For more information on this new benefit program, visit mtabenefits.com.



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Website: www.mtabenefits.com

No dues dollars are ever used to market MTA Benefits programs.

Tip Sheet

All discounts listed in the Tip Sheet can be found at mtabenefits.com.

From Williamstown to Provincetown, the *MTAB Benefits & Discount Directory* offers a multitude of discounts in every Massachusetts county. You'll find numerous savings opportunities, whether you enjoy going to museums, bookstores and theaters or prefer more active pursuits. Start saving today!



Berkshire

The **Berkshire Theatre Group** in Pittsfield offers members a 20 percent discount on tickets. Upcoming shows include *BonJourneyNY: A Tribute to Bon Jovi and Journey*, *Comedy Garage* and *Children's Holiday Extravaganza*. If you're in Williamstown, visit **The Clark Art Institute** and its collection of European and American paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, photographs and decorative arts from the Renaissance to the early 20th century. Save \$2 on admission. **Amy's Cottage of Williamstown** is a great place to purchase gifts. When you show your current MTA card, you'll receive \$5 off a \$50 purchase. Skiers can visit **Ski Butternut** in Great Barrington and receive discounts for the whole family! Discounts vary by weekend, weekday, holidays and age.

Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden

Broadside Bookshop in Northampton has offered a discount to MTA members for 19 years. Save 10 percent on in-stock trade books not already discounted and receive a larger discount on volume purchases. **Club Fitness**, with locations in Chicopee and West Springfield, offers free enrollment, free group classes and one free personal training session. The **Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame** in Springfield offers a \$2 discount for members and up to eight family members. Visit **Zoar Outdoor** in Charlemont before it closes for the season on Nov. 23 and save up to \$10 on a zip line canopy tour for you and your immediate family members.

Worcester

Capen Hill Nature Sanctuary in Charlton is home to walking trails, a library, live animals and a gift shop. Save 15 percent on your gift shop purchase! The **EcoTarium Museum of Science and Nature** in Worcester inspires a passion for science and nature education in visitors of all ages. MTA members always receive free admission. The EcoTarium will extend its celebration of educators in November, when MTA members will also receive free planetarium shows and 10 percent off a one-year membership. Learning, creativity and community building are the foundation at the **Fitchburg Art Museum**, with ongoing exhibitions such as *Discover Ancient Egypt* and limited-time exhibits such as *Interior Effects: Furniture in Contemporary Art*. Members pay a \$5 admission charge and get a \$10 discount on the membership fee.

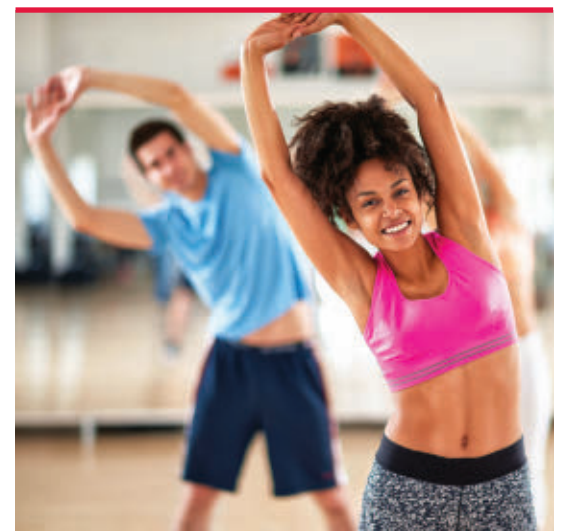


Middlesex and Norfolk

The newly renovated **Discovery Museum** in Acton combines the best STEAM exhibits from the original museum with exciting new ones. Show your member card for free admission. Catch a show at the **Merrimack Repertory Theatre** in Lowell, such as *Murder for Two* or *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*. Pay half price for tickets at 4 p.m. Saturday shows and get \$10 off tickets to all other performances. What better way to see a blockbuster hit than at a **Sunbrella® IMAX 3D Theater at Jordan's Furniture** in Natick or Reading? Members buy one ticket and get one free!

Essex

Barre N9ne Studio, new this year, is offering 10 percent off regularly priced five- and 10-class packages. Essex County locations include Andover and Peabody. Seafood lovers save 10 percent on fresh seafood and live lobster clambake gift packages from **The Fresh Lobster Company** in Gloucester. The **Peabody Essex Museum** in Salem offers free admission to both the museum and the Yin Yu Tang House when you show your member card. Current exhibitions include *Empresses of China's Forbidden City*, *Wild Designs* and *MegaCity: India's Culture of the Streets*.



Suffolk

Boing! JP's Toy Shop in Jamaica Plain, named the best toy store of 2018 by *Boston* magazine, offers members a 10 percent discount on their purchases. You'll find great gift ideas for kids of all ages — from newborn to retired! The **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum** in Boston, most famously known for the 1990 heist that was the single largest recorded property theft in the world, offers a two-for-one discount or half price for a single admission. Explore the collection, which includes works by Rembrandt, Botticelli, Michelangelo and others. **Urban AdvenTours** is a unique, eco-friendly company in Boston that offers bike tours, rentals and sales. Choose from the City View Tour, the Tour de Cambridge and the Funway to Fenway — all at a 10 percent discount when you show your MTA member card.

Continued on page 4

European travel: Predictable and unexpected

With four tours offered between February and April school vacation weeks, MTA Benefits' 2019 travel opportunities include three traditional tours and one rather novel one. The Classical Greece and Costa del Sol/Madrid tours in February and the Florence/Venice/Rome tour in April are traditional, taking in the capitals and many major "must-see" attractions, while the Grand Tour of Ireland in February takes a unique look at a country that is extremely popular with American travelers.

The Grand Tour of Ireland from Feb. 14 to 24 takes in many traditional sights such as Dublin, Galway, Killarney, Blarney Castle, the Ring of Kerry and the Dingle Peninsula. But due to its 11-day, nine-night length, the tour extends into Northern Ireland, including Belfast, the Giant's Causeway, the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge and Letterkenny. The area around Sligo, closely associated with the Irish poet Yeats and often overlooked on tours of Ireland, is also included.

Of course, a trip to Rome, Florence and Venice is a timeless option. This traditional tour from April 12 to 20 takes in all three major cities with stays in just two hotels. Beyond the "big three," the tour also features a day in the Tuscan towns of Siena and San Gimignano, a visit to Assisi and a half-day tour of the Vatican.

MTA's nine-day, seven-night Greece tour from Feb. 16 to 24 is so classic it's actually called "Classical Greece." While many tours of Greece focus intensely on Athens, this tour takes in many other important places on the mainland. Some time is also spent in Patras, a regional capital. This portion of the tour includes Delphi, Olympia, Corinth, Epidauros and Mycenae. The trip also includes a full-day boat tour to the Saronic Islands.

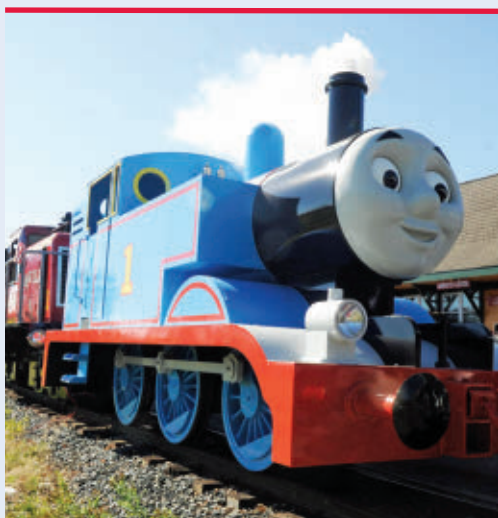


The Costa del Sol and Madrid — a nine-day, seven-night tour from Feb. 16 to 24 — focuses on the beautiful beach-lined southern coast of Spain. (This is an ideal destination for a winter tour since daytime temperatures are typically in the 60s.) The Costa del Sol portion of the trip includes Seville, Ronda, Granada and the Rock of Gibraltar. After a stop in the city of Toledo, the trip continues to Madrid, the capital, and a tour of the world-famous Prado Museum.

For trip details and booking instructions, visit www.mtabenefits.com.

Tip Sheet

Continued from page 3



Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth

Take a voyage through time as you learn about a sailor's life at war and at sea at **Battleship Cove** in Fall River. MTA members get in for free with their current member card. The Christmas Festival of Lights at **Edaville** in Carver takes you into an enchanting wonderland filled with lights, unlimited Christmas train rides and unlimited use of more than 90 rides and attractions. Discounted tickets may be purchased through the MTA Benefits website. Lace up your roller skates and head to **Forrest's Family Fun Center** in Taunton, where members receive free skate rentals and 5 percent off standard party packages!

Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket

The **Cape Cod Central Railroad** in Hyannis is once again offering an MTA discount — 10 percent off all excursions. The creative energy of America's oldest active art colony and the natural beauty of outer Cape Cod come together at the **Provincetown Art Association and Museum**. Members receive free admission and a 10 percent discount in the gift shop. Take the ferry to Nantucket and visit the **Nantucket Historical Association Whaling Museum**, open from April through December. Members receive free admission to exhibitions such as *Paintings from the Nantucket Art Colony* and *Rights and Race*.

For complete details on all member discounts, visit www.mtabenefits.com.