



Pres Sez:

Welcome from the New Head Waiter

By Geoff Ondercin-Bourne, Local 240 President

As most of you know, there's been a 'personnel shift' at Local 240. Therefore, I thought a brief introduction might be in order.

My career at Mohawk College started 10 years ago in the Language Studies Department, after a 15 year stint at Sheridan College. I'm the proud recipient of, not one but two layoff notices. I've been partial load, full-time, then partial load again and now full-time once more. Bad government, bad management: I've seen it in spades. But, as they say, "that was then, this is now."

I'm proud to take the reins of the Local as your new president, and I feel very fortunate to have followed in the footsteps of former President Extraordinaire, Sam Maga, who I'm very pleased decided to stay on the Executive as your Vice President. We have an excellent group of table officers, with Ann Bennett as Chief Steward, Greg Cormier as Treasurer and Kevin Mackay as Communications Officer. With their support, and yours, I look forward to serving you as we head into the turbulent waters of blended learning, modified workload arrangements, codes of conduct, and a wage freeze, just to make it an even number. Come hell or high water, Team 240 is ready to go. (And no, Paul Martin did NOT coin that phrase.)

There are two issues I'd like to discuss in this, my first Prez Sez:

A New Collective Agreement (CA)?

Quite frankly, it looks a lot like the old one, except that we gained some job security language to help our partial load faculty who historically have been forced to play the role of Oliver Twist, begging for work every semester. Also, we made some gains in clarifying the language for coordinators' duties. Kudos to our negotiating team for garnering those admittedly modest gains. On the flipside, we made no progress on two of our top issues, academic freedom and online learning, which means we're still in



"We're still in the awkward position of having those who don't teach telling those who do teach how to teach."

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the awkward position of having *those who don't teach telling those who do teach how to teach*. It's a bit like being wheeled into surgery, only to be told that the surgeon is waiting for instructions from the accountant on the correct procedure for your operation.

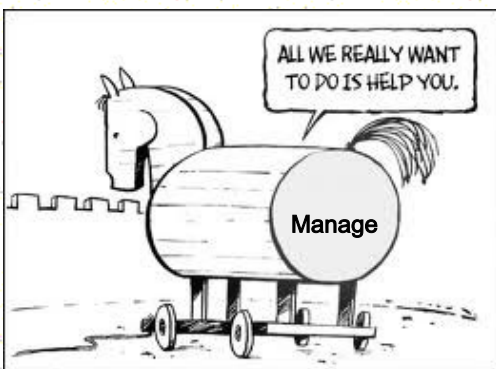
However, we must keep in mind that this is an interim agreement that ends in 2014. In one year, we'll be asking for your input into demand-setting for the next round of bargaining. As Charles Bronson famously said, "Dis ain't ova." Can't argue with poetry like that.

MWAs: Management's Trojan Horse

In each round of bargaining, management has attempted to erode Article 11, the workload article, and rely increasingly on individual bargaining. Modified Workload Arrangements (MWAs) were added to the colleges' toolbox in the previous CA to allow 'alternative' workloads to those prescribed by the SWF. Some faculty have managed to negotiate some favourable deals, as the college seeks to reduce the proportion of faculty on SWFs.

However, just like the introductory offers from cell phone companies, the sticker shock comes later when they've got us all cheerfully signed up, and the real cost suddenly kicks in. As they say, if it's too good to be true it probably isn't.

Caution, therefore, is the rule. We just won an arbitration decision where the college tried to argue, under Article 11.09 A2, that **they could implement an MWA if 2/3 of the faculty who supported an MWA supported an MWA**, a remarkable twist of logic that would have made Lewis Carroll blush. While the arbitrator would have none of it, the case shows that we have to be vigilant; to allow that kind of distorted nonsense to stand would jeopardize future arbitrations and enable management to impose workloads much less favourable than some of the ones they have



supported to date. We're in it for the long haul, and we mustn't let our guard down, even when they make it look as if they're doing faculty a favour.

Finally

The good news is that our students are in the classroom (when they're not getting blended to death), so enjoy doing what we signed up for, which is helping our students learn. After all, **"We're the experts in student success since 1967!"**

We've changed!

For the new academic year, we decided to make a few changes to Examiner's layout and colour scheme. We're aiming for a cleaner, less cluttered format that will improve the readability of your newsletter. Please let us know what you think.

YOU TEACH WHAT YOU'RE TOLD!



Faculty shows more than its fair share of restraint.

Here are the facts:

Recent salary increases by academic year:
09/10: 1%
10/11: 1.5%
11/12: 2%

Increases in the new CA:

12/13: 0%
13/14: 0%

We have fallen well behind the rate of inflation and will continue to do so.

How has management "restrained" its compensation increases over the same period?

Sorry, but the bonus numbers are so big, we don't have room to print them here.

Developing Your Strengths: Get More of What You Focus On!

By Roberta Burke

I have just returned from an educational leave and am thankful to the College and Gallup's Higher Education Practice for supporting my professional development. I had the pleasure to work with Colleges and Universities in Ontario and Canada implementing StrengthsQuest, a student and staff development program based on the philosophy that individuals have the potential to grow most in their areas of talent. We each have unique talents and when we identify and intentionally apply our talents, we develop strengths – areas of excellence!

As management guru Peter Drucker noted, *“One should waste as little effort as possible on improving areas of low competence. It takes far more energy to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than it takes to improve from first-rate performance to excellence.”*

How do you identify your talents? Well, you can take the StrengthsFinder assessment survey (\$10) online (www.strengthsquest.com) to identify your top five talents, or you can look for clues of talent from your day to day experience. What are you doing when you feel most engaged and satisfied? What do you pick up easily? What are you doing when time flies?



Moving from a Deficit approach to a Strengths approach takes constant vigilance. Whenever you find yourself focusing on an individual's weakness you have to stop and focus on his/her strengths. One of the teachers at Sheridan College jokingly said, “Which do you think would improve performance more? Telling your sexual partner what they don't do well, or telling them what they do well?” She gets it! You get more of what you focus on.

How would the Strengths-based philosophy apply to staff development?

In a Strengths-based performance system, you want to identify your areas of strengths so that you can intentionally do more of what you do well. You and your supervisor would seek roles that best match your talents. You would purposely look for complementary partners who possess strengths opposite to yours, to in order to accomplish some roles/tasks. Teams are stronger when they possess different talents. *Differences are considered strengths rather than weaknesses.*

The organization would set people up for success. Employees are most productive and engaged with they have the opportunity to work from their strengths. It would acknowledge that we do not all do things equally well. Gallup research on attributes of great leaders demonstrated that great leaders do not possess the same strengths. A great leader knows their area of strengths and capitalizes on them.

Strengths is not an excuse for not doing something. We still have to manage our weaknesses. It might mean that we need to acquire knowledge and skills to overcome a weakness. Or maybe we can adjust or change the role to exploit our strengths and minimize a weakness. If I were a manager, I would want to know what depletes your energy and look for ways for you to do less of that type of work and more of what energizes you.



“Which do you think would improve performance more? Telling your sexual partner what they don't do well, or telling them what they do well?”

“Employees are most productive and engaged with they have the opportunity to work from their strengths.”

You wouldn't be asked to rate your overall level of performance or compare your performance to others. You would be encouraged to identify the areas in which you can contribute the most, so that your professional development plan would be geared to developing your strengths rather than overcoming your weaknesses. This performance model requires leaders that are committed to developing individuals. Perhaps this is why StrengthsQuest is so successful in a learning environment.

How would a Strengths approach apply to student development?

Educators believe that students possess all of the talents necessary for success in academics and careers. The curriculum would

- focus on helping students identify their talents and apply those talents into their daily lives
- result in differentiated learning – recognizing that there is more than one way to learn and providing students with options to demonstrate their learning.
- assist students to rely on their strengths to navigate challenges. Individual learning plans would be developed based on talent.

Traditional remedial systems come from a deficit approach. They typically assess student weaknesses rather than focus on their strengths. Imagine meeting with a student and starting the conversation by focusing on what they do well rather than looking at their failures. How can you help them to capitalize on their strengths?

Why a Strengths-based Culture?

Strengths development is all about promoting excellence - becoming the best at what we do. When people are engaged at work or in the classroom, they are more productive and experience high levels of well being. More productive translates into revenue and increased retention. It is also about fostering a culture that respects and recognizes diversity. Strengths is a global language. Colleges have transitioned from a teacher-centered institution to a learner-centered institution. With the right leadership and constant vigilance, we can transition from a weakness fixing culture to a strengths-based culture.



[For students, a Strengths approach]... “would result in differentiated learning – recognizing that there is more than one way to learn and providing students with options to demonstrate their learning.”

What is the culture in your department? Take the following quiz.

1. When giving you your teaching assignment, does your manager play to your strengths?
2. Does your Faculty Performance Review focus on building your strengths or identifying your weaknesses?
3. Are the College's innovations in curriculum delivery (on-line and in-class) based on a culture of **differentiated learning**?
4. Are you encouraged to play a leadership role in making decisions about curriculum development and delivery?

Mohawk's new Social Media Policy: You will comply

By Geoff Ondercin-Bourne, President, Local 240

Mohawk is planning to implement its new Social Media Policy within the next month or so. What, you haven't heard of the new policy? Well, don't feel bad; neither had I until I got an email from Sean Coffey, Internal Communications chief, asking to meet with me in regards to this latest "corporate" initiative from the College. Apparently, faculty were left off the invitation list when this policy was being conceived and developed. Oops.

When I looked at the draft, some of what I saw came as no surprise, and I don't think most people would have an issue with those elements that look more or less like common sense ideas. However, I explained that imposing such a policy on employees without any input was probably not the best way to encourage buy-in from the folks who are most affected by it.

To their credit, the administration is backing up ever so slightly and posting an online survey, which provides an opportunity for you to give some feedback to what the college has put forward. It's a bit 'last minute', and there's no way of knowing what the powers-that-be intend to do with it. However, I urge you to read the policy carefully and let them know what you think.

One of my concerns has to do with where the College draws the line between personal use of social media and professional, work-related use, and who decides where that line is to be drawn. As Bob Dylan would have put it, "It ain't you, babe". Also, since social media is an ever-changing, fluid form of communication, how will this policy keep up with the times? (There's another Dylan reference in there somewhere, but I won't wear out my welcome in that regard.)

Finally, there's no mention of what happens in the event of a disagreement between an employee and the employer about the appropriateness of a comment made through social media. What kind of appeal process will be in place to ensure employees' rights aren't trampled on by a grumpy manager who simply disagrees with something posted on Facebook, Twitter or whatever?

My last point is similar to that of Michael Geist, Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law, who wrote a column in the Toronto Star, called [Ottawa's Web 2.0 policy needs tweaking](#). In it, Geist, among other things, warns of the dangers of adopting restrictive communications policies with no safeguards. This is particularly disturbing, as we are a public institution that encourages critical thinking and reflection as a means to innovation.

Please read Geist's article as you consider your response to the College on their current proposal. Also, here is the link to the College's 'consultation' page:

<http://www.mohawkcollege.ca/about/policies/consultation>

"What kind of appeal process will be in place to ensure employees' rights aren't trampled on by a grumpy manager who simply disagrees with something posted on Facebook, Twitter or whatever?"

BIG BROTHER



IS WATCHING YOU

Greetings from the Board

By Heather Giardine-Tuck, Faculty Representative, Board of Governors



Hello Everyone and welcome back! I hope each of you had a wonderful summer.

As your Faculty representative, I attended the Board of Governors' Orientation Session on August 20th, 2012. It was an informative afternoon where the Vice Presidents gave presentations from their areas, we discussed our responsibilities as Board members and then learned how to use Sharepoint, the computer platform the Board employs, thereby allowing the meetings to be paper-free and green. Unsure of what to expect at this Orientation, I was pleasantly surprised to be so warmly welcomed and given such a thorough introduction to the workings of the Board.

I attended my inaugural Board of Governors meeting on September 12th, 2012. The atmosphere was one of hope and optimism for the coming year, particularly in view of the fact that an agreement had been reached between our Bargaining Team and the Management group. All were pleased that we were off to a smooth and positive start.

The first presentation was given by the Student Services Team. They talked about the success of the two Start Smart Orientation to College sessions which were held June 28th and August 28th as well as the very popular Orientation Welcome Days, September 4th and 5th. You may have noticed the inclusion of the food trucks this year which were enthusiastically received! The Make Your Mark sessions were also discussed. With their focus on student success strategies, it is hoped that the majority of our students will attend. The Student Services team also outlined their plans for continuing to improve the services offered to students in The Square and throughout the College.

On the Academic side, the newly enhanced and modified Mechanical Techniques program was presented. With five streams, it was created to develop fundamental skills applicable to a variety of trade sectors allowing us to respond to current labour market demands and employment opportunities.

Finally, we heard about the Mohawk One Card which is the new student ID card allowing students to access a variety of services. The initial rollout is to our students this fall and will be extended to Faculty, Support and other employees next.

Have a great semester! More from the Board after our next meeting November 14th, 2012.

STEWARDS NEEDED: see your area steward if you are interested

Get informed, get involved; you won't regret it !

STARRT, Business and Human Services need a second steward to represent their members.. The Local Executive Committee (LEC: Officers and other stewards) meet once a month for 10 months September-June.

At these meetings you will be kept informed of all the activities that the officers have been attending to since the last meeting, you will have a chance to ask the president and other officers directly for explanations and at the "round table" you can let the officers know of your members' concerns which they will take directly to the Union-College committee (CCA).



College faculty just went through a difficult round of negotiations in which the broader austerity agenda and threats from the provincial government truncated the bargaining process. As a result we achieved no gains in the critical areas of academic freedom and online learning. Both of these are important employment and quality of education issues, and moving forward on them will take a significant organizing campaign. The union was better prepared this round, but we'll have to be even more proactive when the current two year deal expires.

The article below, written by a colleague at York University and brought to our attention by PAC member, Shelley Rempel, describes an inspiring victory by teachers in Chicago, and shows what can happen when a membership gets organized, and when a union throws its full resources behind a campaign. In the coming year, the PAC will be active in building our local capacity to mobilize members, and in getting our message out to faculty, students, and the broader community. Quality education concerns us all, and College faculty are the professionals who can best defend it.

If you want to get involved with the Local 240 PAC and help us with upcoming activities, please contact Kevin MacKay: kevin.mackay@mohawkcollege.ca

7 Days that Shook Chicago: The 2012 Chicago Teachers Strike

By Peter Brogan, PhD candidate and Teaching Assistant in Geography at York University

On Tuesday, September 18, 2012 the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) House of Delegates voted overwhelmingly to suspend their first strike in 25 years, begun on the previous Monday, September 10 at 12:01 am. Many commentators from both left alternative publications and in the corporate press have observed that in an era of austerity when seemingly no unions in the United States – and I would add Canada – are fighting back against layoffs, budget cuts, wage freezes and the like, the CTU has stood up to a city government that was seeking massive concessions. Many of these concessions, from merit pay and teacher evaluations based on standardized tests, have been central to the dismantling of public education that has been advanced by political and economic elites like the Commercial Club of Chicago, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Walton Foundation under the guise of “education reform.” As CTU president Karen Lewis noted on more than one occasion, this strike was part of a wider battle over the soul of public education. I would add that it has also been a testing ground for an alternative strategy, movement oriented strategy for the North American labour movement.



While the members of the union still need to vote on whether or not to ratify the tentative agreement negotiated over the weekend, which was examined and discussed by members on the picket lines Monday and Tuesday, it is likely to be ratified within the next two weeks.

Read the full article here: [Seven Days that Shook Chicago](#)



RETIREES: congratulations!

Ronald Binns Media & Entertainment
Jane Hambley Human Services
Rachel Howison Language Studies
Allen Laden Media & Entertainment
Jo-Ann Lamore Business
Clyde Meldrum STARRT
Randy Miller Rec Leadership
Michael Piczak Business
Olga Sarafyn Practical Nursing
Derek Whitney Graphic Design

NEW HIRES: welcome!

Carmen Farrell Public Safety & Security
John Holloway Computer Science
Shawn Hoyle Mechanical Eng
Jennifer Jahnke Counsellor
Scott Kenney Graphic Design
Daisy Korah Electro Tech
Kamala Kruse Chemical Eng Tech
Richard Ma Electro Tech
Joseph Mamone Media & Entertainment
Elizabeth Martin Mathematics
Mary Martin Business Management
Andrew McTear Business Management
Jay Mycroft Chemical Eng Tech
Amanda Newnham Rec Leadership
Francisco Perez-Pinal Electro Tech
Farg Soliman Chemical Eng Tech
Douglas Winstanley Mechanical Eng

This year the college hired more faculty than retired, so we

now have 4 MORE faculty than we did in 2009!

The local stewards and the union officers have been keeping a close eye on the number of part time faculty, particularly Partial Load (7-12 hours per week), that are being employed by the college and trying to get the college to **honour the Collective Agreement** and convert those hours into full time positions where the use of part time hours cannot be justified.

Last February, the union again put in grievances for various areas where the use of part time faculty was the highest and some gains were made; however, most of the hiring was done in response to grievances outstanding from 2011. We are also happy to acknowledge that in several cases the college hired to replace retirees without any pressure from us.

The **Fall 2012 list of Partial Load hours shows a total of 2780 hours of teaching covered by Partial Load faculty**, up from 2400 hours in Fall 2011. Consequently, we want the college to know that we will

continue to be vigilant and have let them know for which areas we want justification regarding their use of PL faculty. We won't let up on trying to get more fulltime faculty hired. .

GRIEVANCE REPORT

Article 4 Harassment, Article 6 Management Functions After conducting an external independent investigation, the college determined that the member was not harassed.

Article 2 Staffing BScN -withdrawn

Article 2 Staffing Language Studies -withdrawn

Article 32 Dismissal without just cause -resolved to member's satisfaction

Article 32 Dismissal without just cause -pending arbitration



News from Here and There

By Geoff Ondercin-Bourne,
President, Local 240

Corporate education in Ontario: Austerity by any other name....

The Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has released its report on future directions for post-secondary education (PSE) in the province. The report predictably calls for “solutions” based on the premise for lower levels of funding for PSE. At a meeting of Mohawk’s, **President’s Advisory Council**, members of the committee discussed the report and, to their credit, some members of the committee challenged the report’s fiscal assumptions. Read the original report here:

[Strengthening Ontario's Centres of Creativity, Innovation and Knowledge](#)

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) challenges McGuinty’s austerity agenda for PSE

Not everyone is jumping on the austerity bandwagon when it comes to PSE. OCUFA has written a response to the MTCU’s report, which, although aimed primarily at universities, is every bit as applicable to the college system. Read OCUFA’s rebuttal to the MTCU’s ‘Ode to Austerity’ here:

[Growing Ontario's Universities for the Future](#)

Mohawk Institute of Health and Technology: whither the “Community” College?

Mohawk has submitted its strategy for the future direction of the college (sorry, “institute”), and it’s going to affect you, whatever area in which you currently teach. What’s in store? Lots of interesting talking points such as *commercialization*, *productivity gains*, and *private-public partnerships* (Note that “private” comes first). No mention of privatization, but “if it talks like a duck and walks like a duck....” Read more:

[Strategic Mandate Submission](#)



Austerity: The ‘Big Lie’

Adam Davidson-Harden, [rabble.ca](#)

“The sleight of hand in all of this is that austerity is not necessary. As citizens and workers we can choose to either roll over and accept the neoliberal austerity agenda, or reject it and demand social and economic policy that not only advances public programs and goods for all, but moves toward models of investment, lending and finance that require the rich and corporations to contribute more to the common good, and toward a sustainable future.” Read more: [Responding to](#)

[McGuinty's Attacks on Labour - Why we can't just roll over](#)

Sober second thought on the use of technology in the classroom

Doug Mann, *The Toronto Star*, Sunday, October 7, 2012

Mann, from the Faculty of Information and Media Studies at Western, argues that “digital technology has dumbed down higher education”. Read more: [Let's unplug the digital classroom](#)

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Got an issue you want to examine?

We welcome your contributions but reserve the right to edit for length and appropriateness. Please submit your article, email, letter or cartoon to our editors.



Local 240 Officers and Stewards, Sept 2012-Aug 2014

Local 240 Officers

President: Geoff Ondercin-Bourne
 Vice President: Sam Maga
 Chief Steward: Ann Bennett
 Treasurer: Greg Cormier
 Communications Officer: Kevin MacKay

Local Executive Committee (LEC)

<u>Steward(s)</u>	<u>Extension</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u># faculty</u>	<u>Location</u>
For Interdisciplinary Studies (Fennell) – Alison Horton & Gary Jennings				
Ann Bennett	3085	General Arts and Science Pre-Health, Gen Ed, Music	32	F175
Kevin MacKay	3364			F175
Geoff Ondercin-Bourne	3952	Language Studies	33	A126
Leanne Forsythe	3210	C&CP, ESL, DEP	16	A126
Sue Collins	3427			J135
Mechanical, construction & Apprenticeship (STARRT) – Wayne Ostermaier & Tony Fazzari				
Warren Hyde	5013	STARRT Building/Construction Trades	51	STC C114
Greg Neale	5278	STARRT – Mechanical Motive Power F + SC Welding, Truck and Coach, Autobody, GM Mechanical	23	B106
Engineering Technology (Fennell) Chris Blackwood & Bill Brimley & Tom Low				
Sabu Joseph	3172	Electrotechnology Post-Sec	16	E240D
Martin Weddum	3582	Comp Science & Info Tech	25	E131
Sam Maga	3248	Bachelor of Techn'y Program Mech Eng Technician Mechanical Techniques (CAD/CAM) Aviation Math	18	E110
Monica Crawford	3258	Bldg & Construction Sciences Chemical, Environmental & Biotechnology	24	E310 C
Library, Counseling & Accessible Services, CTLR (Brantford, Fennell, IAHS, STARRT) R Matthews & Ted Scott				
Roberta Bourke	3349	Library, Counsel & Dis, CTLR	20	A227
Health Sciences (IAHS) Donna Rawlins & Diane Barrafato				
Leslie Marshall	4624	Med Rad Sci Pharmacy, CVT, DCS, OTA/PTA	25	A227
Mary Allan	53-26826	Bachelor of Nursing	21	IAHS 340
Marie Stoneman	53-26760	Practical Nursing, & PSW	18	IAHS 227
Community and Urban Studies (Brantford & Fennell) Jo-Anne Procter & Neil McMahon				
Dennis Campbell	6054	Police Studies, Pre-Justice, LASA & PF, Private Security Health, Wellness and Fitness (& Co-op) Instructor - Blind & Vis. Impaired, Orient & Mobility Rehab Teaching	28	BTFDD207
Shelley Rempel	3825	Human Services: CYW, ECE, EA, R&L, SSW, Autism & Beh. Sci, Concurrent Disorders, Developmental SW Apprenticeship.	31	A224
Business Communications and Entertainment (Fennell) Ken Wallis & Jane Cooper & Art Domenicucci				
Patrick Hanson	3175	TV, Radio, Journalism, Pre-Media Graphic Tech Art & Script Fund, Graphics Media Foundation, Graphic Design Production	21	F108
Greg Cormier	3331	OA, T&Travel, Event Management	50	M wing
Carl Weston	3073	Small Business, Advertising, Marketing Accounting, Insurance, Gen Business, Business Admin, Financial Services, Small Business & Entrepreneurship, Business Foundations, International Business		
Auditors/Trustees	Carol Tristani & Ted Russell			M wing
Union Office	3468			A06