

WCCFT *Union* NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of The Westchester Community College Federation of Teachers

Faculty Development Builds a Winning Team

Renee Balotti:

Course work Teacher Education Institute:
Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom



Renee Balotti

Claudia Cardoso

Claudia Cardoso:

Conference (Norway):
Trans-disciplinary inquiry into art,
science, technology and design



Bill Costanzo:

Conference (New Orleans):
Society for Cinema and Media Studies



Bill Costanzo

Carlos Delgado

Carlos Delgado:

International music study, composition
and performance (Italy)



Daryl Nosek:

Johnson & Wales University (Denver):
Culinary Education Training in Pastry Arts



Daryl Nosek

Layla Qaabidh

Layla Qaabidh:

Course work CUNY:
Information technology in healthcare and nursing





A Monthly Newsletter of
Local 2431 American Federation of Teachers (AFL-CIO)
Affiliated with New York State United Teachers

WCCFT Officers, 2009-2011

Anne D'Orazio, President
Mel Bienenfeld, Vice-President
Joyce McQuade, Treasurer
Rafael Rodriguez, Secretary

Diane Urban, Adjunct Coordinator

WCCFT Executive Board

Rob Applebaum, Environment
Ron Brown, Outreach
Laurie Corey, VOTE COPE
S. Tanae Franklin, Faculty Development
and Governance
Rowan Lindley, Member Benefits
Steve Nardozi, Health & Safety
Joanna Peters, Scholarship/Research

Newsletter Editorial Board

Richard Rodriguez, Editor
Patti Schulster, Staff Writer
Alfredo Quinones, Editorial Assistant

Office: Technology Bldg. room 32
Phone: (914) 345-8856
Fax: (914) 345-2761

Newsletter printer

Efficiency Printing Co., A Union Shop
126 So. Lexington, White Plains, NY
914-949-8611

Calendar of Events

Monthly Meetings:
First Wednesday,
11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Technology Building 107
(Lunch is served)

February 1, 2012
Solidarity

March 7, 2012
Benefits

April 4, 2012
Health & Safety

April 25 -29, 2012
NYSUT RA

May 2, 2012
Legislative Event



President's Message

What Has the Union Done For Me Lately?

By Anne D'Orazio

It is clearly understood that it is the responsibility of a union to negotiate a contract which defines wages and working conditions for employees and to represent its members in any violation of the collective bargaining agreement signed by the union and management. The issue is this: What is the union's obligation to its members beyond these essential tasks and what is the member's obligation to the union?

The simple answer is: Maybe nothing. A union can function without an office, committees, a newsletter, regular membership meetings, educational training, or social functions. It can exist from year to year with minimal member participation, fulfilling its duties regarding bargaining and grievance handling and not much, if anything, more. But is this what members need from their union? What more can and should be done?

First of all, it is the vision of the WCCFT to establish a union culture on campus, that is, to foster a climate of collectivity and solidarity—two fundamental principles of trade unionism. To this end, the WCCFT started first a four-page and then an eight-page monthly newsletter with articles on issues affecting members: contract compliance, benefits maintenance, adjunct inequality and health and safety problems. It informs members about political campaigns, legislative lobbying, case law on academic freedom and intellectual property. The editor has solicited and encouraged opinion pieces, sound off letters and debates. Also, to disseminate union values and accomplish specific tasks, the WCCFT formed committees within the Executive Board such as benefits, governance, health and safety.

Secondly, for ten years, the WCCFT fought to get office space for formal meetings and informal gatherings and finally secured a substantial piece of campus real estate in the Tech Building. Gradually, some members have come to utilize the space. More

involvement in work and use of the books and materials is needed. To encourage that, we will be posting hours the office is open and hope that members will take up our offer for them to use the office for meetings as well as union work.

Third, the WCCFT greatly expanded the faculty development resource and bargained for substantially more money from the College, even from the County Board of Legislators, to be given to faculty. It added research to the reimbursable categories of expenditures and for the first time included adjuncts as members eligible to apply for funds. And the WCCFT set aside money for student scholarships, first one, now three, hefty \$2,000 prizes.

Fourth, the WCCFT has inaugurated grievance training sessions and workshops on specific issues, for example, student complaint procedures in an effort to develop core leadership.

Finally, the WCCFT has maintained an active presence in local, state, national and international labor union organizations, attending the Westchester-Putnam Central Labor Body of the AFL-CIO, the New York State United Teachers Community College Conference, the AFT Higher Education Conference and AFT Conventions and brought back ideas and materials from these educational sessions.

The leadership of the WCCFT has opted for

an expansive view of trade unionism, but it is the membership that must drive the direction of the union. The membership must have a vision of what it expects from the union and demand all the requirements of democracy and transparency it deserves from the governing bodies. In return, members must attend meetings regularly, participate in committee work and utilize the union office. Members have the right and obligation to ask, What has the union done for me lately? And members have a responsibility to be part of the doing.

"...it is the membership that must drive the direction of the union."

Developing With a Little Help From the Union

By Patti Schulster

We educators often talk about our hope to inspire in our students a desire for life-long learning for its own sake; we want to build in them the same incandescent flames that burn within us. Fortunately, our union understands not only that need in us, but also the benefit that comes to any professor who reignites a passion, acquires a new skill, or dialogues with others in the field. With that comprehension, the union provides the kindling of funding though faculty development money that it bargained for by contract and has increased steadily over the years. Both

full-time faculty and, in the last five years, adjunct faculty can apply for these funds in the form of reimbursement for tuition for a course, fees for a conference or workshop, or some other professional activity, including research. A full-time faculty member must have worked at the College for a full year, while an adjunct must have completed a minimum of ten (10) semesters with WCC and have been employed at least one semester during the academic year for which she makes the application. Funds for both depend upon the number of applicants each year, with the total fund divided

among all the applicants with a maximum of \$1,500 to be paid to any one full-time member and a maximum of \$500 paid to any one adjunct. Each year, the union receives around 50 applications and gives away roughly \$45,000. Two recent and delighted recipients of that money include Dr. Claudia Kraemer, Biology adjunct (almost exclusively on Saturdays) and Dr. Richard Courage, English Department full-timer. Both professors have so enjoyed the benefits of these development funds that they have applied multiple times.



Dr. Claudia Kraemer

Kraemer attends NABT Conference

For the past two years, Dr. Kraemer, who also teaches full-time at UCONN, has utilized her funding to attend the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) Conference in October. Here, she says, she “gets to meet publishers, see new technology and tools, and play with the new toys, all in one room!” She also notes that she attends some very good workshops there and so “enrich[es] her knowledge” and has the important opportunity “to talk to people who talk my own language.” Be-

fore she learned of this union benefit, she always had to pay out-of-pocket and suffer the loss of a day’s pay simultaneously. “Now,” she says, “I have to wait a year, but the money gets close to covering my costs. Even with my other job, this money is so valuable – and it’s such a simple procedure to get it. I encourage every adjunct to apply” she exclaims. She plans to apply again next year for the conference from which she has just returned.

Courage publishes book

Dr. Courage has returned to ask for this faculty development money five years in a row so that he could conduct research for his recently published book, *The Muse in Bronzeville* (Rutgers University Press). “My first trip to Chicago took place in March, 2006, and from that time until last year, I took three trips a year back to Chicago.” He also traveled to Syracuse University, University of California at Berkeley, Howard University, and the Schomburg Library. “By the time I was done combing these archives, interviewing nearly a dozen people in their eighties and nineties, and visiting key areas such as the South Side Community Art Center and George

Cleveland Hall Library, I had a two-drawer file cabinet bursting with the results of my work – and I used a lot of it in my book,” he says. “I’d also had the opportunity to co-curate an art exhibition at the Koehline Museum at Oakton Community College in Illinois and to speak on behalf of the Black Chicago History Forum at Roosevelt University.” Dr. Courage found the process of applying for these funds “straight forward” and says he “couldn’t have done his research without them.” To see the results of this labor, anyone can visit richardacourage.com and/or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHOzSwp1Xis>.



Dr. Richard Courage

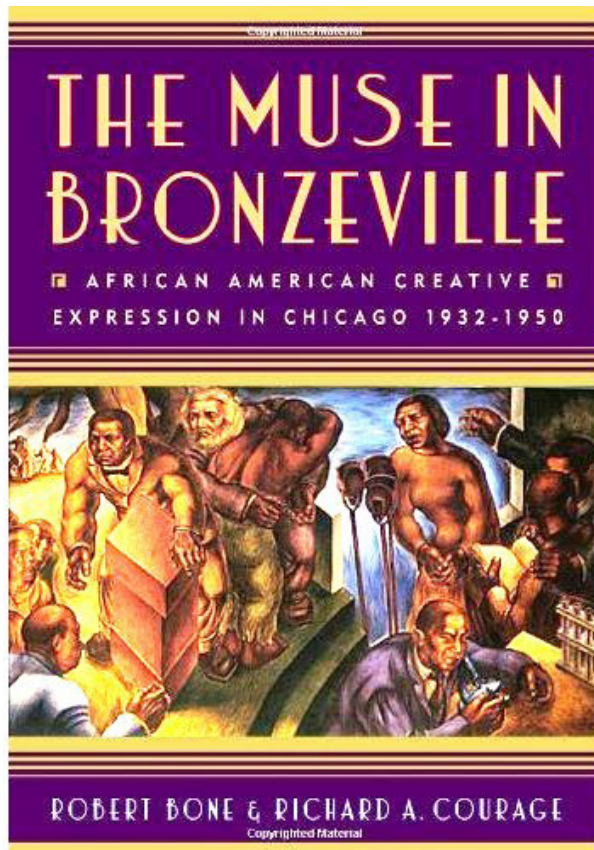
(See “Funds” on page 4)

Funds
(Continued)

Whether we choose to labor at research, course study, or workshop or conference attendance, the union cheers on our efforts

and stokes the fires of our desires to keep adding to our education. In fact, in the next round of bargaining, it plans to ask the ad-

ministration for additional funds. We need only watch for the annual fall announcements asking for our applications.



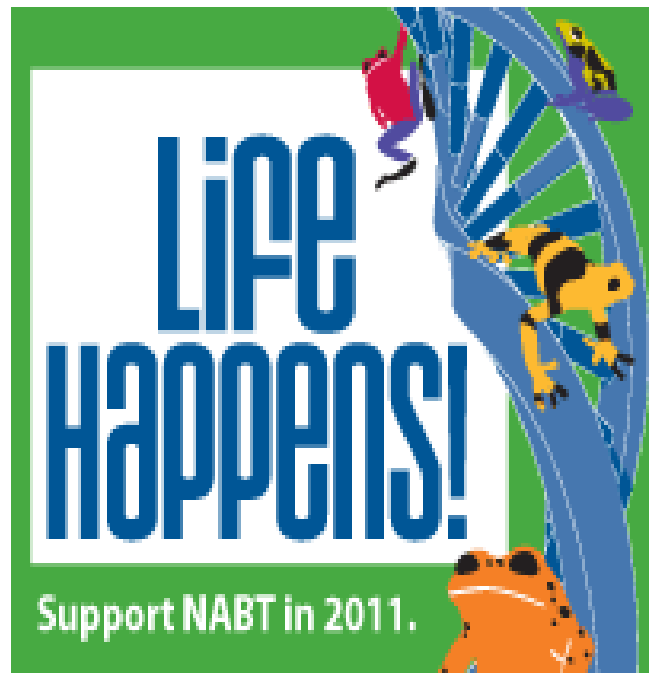
Dr. Courage found the process of applying for these funds “straight forward” and says he “couldn’t have done his research without them.”

“...this money is so valuable – and it’s such a simple procedure to get it. I encourage every adjunct to apply.” -Dr. Claudia Kraemer

A Muse in Bronzeville is the first comprehensive critical study of the creative awakening that occurred on Chicago’s South Side from the early 1930s to the cold war.

...the union cheers on our efforts and stokes the fires of our desires to keep adding to our education.

Since its inception, more than 9,000 educators have joined The National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) to share experiences and expertise with colleagues from around the globe.



**SPRING TRAINING STARTS:
Wednesday, February 1, 2012 @ 11:00 A.M.
General Membership Meeting**

