MATC Micromanagers!

By Kevin Mulvenna
Local 212 Executive Vice President

I just don’t get it. I thought that here at MATC we were working to build a culture of trust and collaboration. If that’s the case, then why are there administrators who are working to demean and demoralize their faculty and educational professionals via their warped definition of “accountability”?

Your Local 212 staff and officers are being deluged with examples of micromanaging on the part of Associate Deans and managers like never before. We hear of programs and departments declaring the onset of “blackout days” when vacations will no longer be allowed. When seasoned, well-respected faculty make reasonable requests for time off by citing the compelling personal reason, substitute teaching or professional leave sections of the Employee Handbook and its Faculty Appendix they are denied by their petty Associate Dean. Other such transgressions include faculty being called at home and asked for copies of syllabi for classes that haven’t begun, placing counselling letters in personnel files for missing grades and missing timesheets without even having a discussion with the accused, and not to mention the endless reminders from “Dumb Total” to complete tasks that have nothing to do with our mission to provide a quality educational experience for our students. Apparently there is an entire management bureaucracy with nothing to do but construct barriers to positive relationships and hoops for their charges to jump through.

First of all, MATC is a school. Schools revolve around two quintessential groups: their students and the educational professionals who teach and support those students. Schools don’t revolve around human resource departments, legal departments, and the like. In fact, all of those could be outsourced and many mid-level management positions here at MATC eliminated completely.

Secondly, Deans and Associate Deans have the responsibility to support and advocate for their faculty and students. Their role isn’t to nitpick, micromanage and look for ways to chastise those to whom they should be listening, understanding, and supporting. It wasn’t that long ago that Tom Thibodeau spoke to the entire MATC community about servant leadership, the importance of our “words and our presence” and “sharing the good stuff.” What the heck happened? I’ll tell you what happened.

In the interest of establishing “accountability,” MATC created a “gotcha cul-

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ture." That's right, against all the research on management and coaching that stresses finding and encouraging the positive, some MATC managers are looking for ways to get you. Instead of having a conversation when something is amiss, more and more you find yourself being called into Labor Relations for a “fact finding” meeting. And don’t even try to complain against your administrator, for they are protected at all costs by those above them and will only be assigned a consultant to shadow them and provide remedial management training.

Before I am accused of painting with a broad brush, let me make clear that there are some wonderful people in management positions here at MATC. In fact, I would argue that the majority are just that or are swimming against the tide trying to be. But like every institution, it is the bad apples that taint the rest. Please also know that as a union, we are all about accountability on all sides. We will represent but cannot defend those who neglect their duties, act inappropriately, etc. Yes, all faculty must keep office hours, post their syllabi in Bb, and comply with all provisions of the Employee Handbook and its Faculty Appendix. What we will not tolerate are policies and practices that punish the majority of those compliant and true professionals in an attempt to correct the few outliers. We will not tolerate the inconsistent interpretation and enforcement of policies and procedures between divisions and individual administrators. Again, if an administrator has an issue with someone under their supervision, they must have the difficult conversation(s) and handle it with that person - someone they have hopefully developed a trusting relationship with (Management 101).

So please know and understand that as professional educators we are accountable, to our students first and foremost, and that everything else is a very distant second. That is as it must be. We insist that administration treat us with the same respect and empathy with which they themselves would like to be treated.

Your union has been successful at rolling back some of the occurrences listed above (counseling letters) and we will continue to push back on others as they come to light. Please keep us informed and know that while your supervisor may or may not have developed a trusting relationship with you - your union always has your back!

Midterm Election Activities Well Under Way

Local 212 is in the midst of conducting lots of volunteer efforts for the November 6th election. We are encouraging staff (and students) to early vote. This will be very easy downtown for city residents since they can vote on the 3rd floor of the S building. Interested members should call the office if you are interested in joining in.

Local 212 and AFT has endorsed three terrific statewide candidates. Tony Evers for Governor, Josh Kaul for Attorney General and Tammy Baldwin for US Senate. Watch for postcards on some of the important state senate

Left: Local 212 VP for Paraprofessionals, Felton Benton, shares his insights with a packed house at the Elections Organizing Meeting held at the Local 212 offices.

Right: Representatives from the Milwaukee Area Service and Hospitality union (MASH) seek feedback from attendees of the Elections Organizing Meeting held at the Local 212 offices.

Photos by Lisa Conley.
Retiree Corner

By Barbara Toles, Retiree Chapter President

On Monday, October 8th a group of retirees had the opportunity to attend the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans (WIARA) 2018 Power Luncheon held at the Italian Community Center. The featured speakers were Congresswoman Gwen Moore (who filled in for Senator Tammy Baldwin) and the Consul General of Canada.

Union retirees and other citizens are joining the WIARA to fight for the dignity and security of older Americans and working families. Several people running for office also spoke; Sarah Godlewski who is running for State Treasurer, Tom Palzewicz who is running for the 5th District Congressional seat against Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner, and former Lt. Governor, Barbara Lawton, who campaigned for Josh Kaul and Sarah Godlewski. There was one theme that resonated with all the speakers, that was our need to get out and VOTE on Tuesday, November 6th.

The next Retiree Chapter Quarterly Meeting will be on Friday, October 19th at 9:15 in Rooms M612-M614 on the Downtown Campus. Our guest speaker will be Josh Kaul, candidate for Wisconsin Attorney General. Faculty and staff are welcome to attend and bring your class.

Educators Against Proposed Changes to For-Profit College Regulations

Local 212 President Lisa Conley and Kimberlaya Bledsoe, speak at a press conference held at Gateway Technical College on September 13, 2018.

They joined with others to protest the US Department of Education’s proposed weakening of regulations on for-profit colleges and their predatory practices.

Gateway was one of three national locations that hosted the US Department of Education Rules Change Listening Sessions.

Photos anonymous.

Condolences to......

Friends and family of
Rose Massey (faculty)
Member
Jackie Cook (brother)

Upcoming Union Meeting Dates

Nov 13 Executive Board Mtg
Local 212 office, 4:30 pm

Nov 14 General Membership Mtg
Mequon A 129, 4:30 pm

Nov 27 District Board Mtg
Downtown, M200, 4:00 pm
February 15, 2019 is the 1st Annual FAST Fund Valentine’s Day Gala. This event will include a silent auction. The event will be located at the Milwaukee Brewing Company, 1128 N. 9th Street, just around the corner from the Local 212 office.

Donations Sought for 1st Annual FAST Fund Valentine’s Day Gala Silent Auction!

Contact FAST Fund Director Michael Rosen (mrosen@local212.org) or Local 212 President Lisa Conley (iconley@local212.org) if you have items - from gift certificates to sporting tickets to vacation rentals - to donate.

FAST Fund
Believe in Students!

FAST Fund is an economic emergency fund for MATC students

Annual Valentine’s Day FAST Fund Gala
Friday February 15, 2019

AUCTION ITEM DONATION FORM

YES, I would love to help by donating an item for the auction!

Gift: ____________________________________________

Value: __________________________________________

Your name as you would like it to appear in all publications: __________________________________________

Donor Name: ______________________________________

Donor Address: ______________________________________

Donor Phone: ______________________________________

Donor Email: ______________________________________

☐ I am mailing or will drop off my donation.

☐ Please pick up my donation.

Gift Certificates      Gourmet Food Items
Travel Experiences    Jewelry
Vacation Home Rentals  Sports Merchandise
Luxury Boxes          Electronics
Bottles of Fine Wine/Liquor  Home Improvement Services
Theatre Tickets        Sports Tickets
Art

Please Return Form to:
Believe in Students FAST Fund
ATTN: Gala Silent Auction
739 W. Juneau Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Phone: (414) 765-0910 Fax: (414)765-9141

Our Tax ID number is 81-3612875
Please Respond by January 15, 2019
Thank You for Supporting MATC Students!
Local 212 Hosts Student Debt Clinic

By Lisa Conley  
Local 212 President

Student debt affects roughly 45 million people in the United States. While this number includes current students and recent graduates, the burden of student debt haunts former students from all walks of life and all professions for decades after graduation, including K-12 teachers, college educators, and other professionals. In addition to the debtor, education-related debt has negative impact on the U.S. economy, and therefore, the whole country.

Consider the following statistics related to student debt:

- At over $1.5 trillion nationally, this debt surpasses all types of household debt other than mortgages, leaving little disposable income for borrowers to return to the US economy.
- Nearly 1 in 4 federal borrowers are in default or struggling to meet their payment obligations. Failing to meet payment schedules ruins credit ratings and defaulting leaves the American Dream out of reach for many.
- A survey of AFT Members demonstrated that:
  - 8 in 10 cited student debt as a “major burden or challenge”.
  - Student debt has greatest negative impact on “young people, women and people of color, with 72 percent of African-American respondents indicating that student debt is a major household burden, compared with 61 percent of white respondents.”
  - The risk to future financial security is great with “1 in 3 AFT members responding reporting that they have had their student loans go into default.”

And,

- 64 percent of members struggling under this burden report forgoing paying for items of daily living such as food, with 42 percent being unable to pay for needed medical treatment.

Your union, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), continues to be a leader in the fight for higher education opportunities that are both accessible and affordable, as well as post-secondary education financing practices that are equitable and transparent. This fight includes leading a recent law suit against Navient, one of the nation’s largest student loan servicers whose lending practices are suspect, and creating a student debt education program that assists members struggling under the burden of student loan payments.

To that end, Local 212 hosted a well-attended Student Debt Clinic in M616 of the MATC Milwaukee campus on October 3. The 90-minute event, co-sponsored by AFT-Wisconsin, was facilitated by Chris Goff, a student debt specialist provided by AFT-National. In attendance was an interesting mix of members from MATC faculty to area nurses to K-12 school psychologists— from various area AFT Locals, as well as MATC students.

Attendees learned about various options to repay student debt, including through public loan forgiveness and income-driven repayment plans, as well as helpful “do’s and don’ts” for applying for and continuing enrollment. Those present also received advice on how to avoid falling for scam offers of assistance.

Additional clinics are anticipated in the future. In the meantime, you can obtain a copy of the informational packet provided at the clinic by contacting the Local 212 office.

You can learn more about the issue of student debt and AFT’s related activity by using the links below and others provided on the AFT Website.


Local 212 hosted a well-attended Student Debt Clinic on October 3. Thank you to Chris Goff from AFT National for facilitating the clinic and to AFT-Wisconsin for co-sponsoring the event, including providing dinner for the attendees.

Photo by Ta’Sha Barber.

New Member Benefits from AFT

• ID Theft Program -FREE Identity Theft Protection benefit for ALL members including retirees. This benefit is very different from the “free” service your bank or credit card company offers. The new AFT benefit includes recovery and restoration and expense reimbursement if you fall victim to identity theft. Any identity theft service can alert you to suspicious activity, but we will be there to help you fix it so you can spend your time doing what’s important to you.

• Dansko–20% discount through the AFT site. Anyone who spends time on their feet during the day needs to spend a little bit of time on the Dansko site checking out the shoe options. Members must register to get to the Members-Only site.

Learn about more great benefits offered through AFT – from movie tickets to travel discounts – by going to https://www.aft.org/member-benefits/benefits-aft-members-only

Your Union Working for You!!
FALL BACK TO SCHOOL SOCIAL A BIG SUCCESS!

Approximately 80 members enjoyed good food, conversation and comradery at the Fall Back-to-School social solidarity event held at Best Place on September 6. Thank you to Social Solidarity Chair Nyia Sallee, Member Engagement Chair Eric Hagedorn, Part-time Faculty VP Richard Cohn and Local 212 Office Manager, Brian Hafemann for making the event a big success.

Our next social solidarity event will be the annual Holiday Party in December. More information to come.

A good time was had by all at the September Back-to-School social solidarity event.

AFL-CIO CONVENTION

AFL-CIO National President, Richard Trumka, shares his insights with delegates to the Wisconsin AFL-CIO Biennial Convention. Photo by Sue Ruggles.

Local 212 member Steve Watrous takes a moment to smile for the camera while attending the recent Wisconsin AFL-CIO Convention held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Milwaukee. Photo by Sue Ruggles.

Local 212 AFL-CIO-Wisconsin Convention delegate Michael Stock stands to show his appreciation. Photo by Sue Ruggles.

Local 212 members share a photo op with endorsed candidate for Wisconsin Governor, Tony Evers, at a recent fundraiser held at Best Place. Photo by Kara Conley.