

MCEA NEWS *Extra*

May 2004

Maryland Classified Employees Association

USM salary guidelines clarified

MCEA has been getting a lot of questions about the COLA and merit pay raise for University System of Maryland employees. Be advised that a USM employee will receive the \$752 COLA even if the increase exceeds his/her pay range. However, the employee will not receive the 2.5% merit increase if it exceeds his/her pay range after the \$752 COLA is added on.

The Chancellor has written a letter to Presidents about the salary guidelines. The USM web site link is <http://www.usmd.edu/ppex/SalGuide-FY2005.html>.

New insurance plan for children introduced

Significant protection for as little as \$1.47 per pay. If you are a parent, grandparent, great-grandparent or legal guardian of a child under age 12 or young adult under age 17, you should look in to MCEA's latest member benefit - an affordable life insurance policy for those children. The "Grow Up" Plan (under 12) doubles at age 21 at no extra cost. The "Young Adult" Plan (13-17) provides life insurance for as little as \$1.89 per pay. To participate or to obtain answers to questions regarding this new benefit, contact MCEA Insurance at R.K. Tongue Co., 410-752-4008 or 1-800-638-6353.

Board elects new Officers

Allen Evans, a Prevention Supervisor with Charles County Health Department, returns as 2nd Vice President and Marilyn Miller, Office Services Clerk I with Parole and Probation, as Secretary, after the Board of Directors elected them to the positions on May 20 from chapter nominations. Both will complete the terms, which expire in October 2005.

Past President Art Caple dies

Arthur N. Caple, MCEA President from 1972 to 1974, died suddenly on May 22. Members and friends remembered him as a prankster, great orator, and skilled financial and retirement administrator. Art had a distinguished 40-year career in State service.

At the time of his death, he was Executive Director of Maryland's Supplemental Retirement Agency and a member of the State Retirement and Pension System Board of Trustees, on which he chaired the investment committee. A longtime MCEA member, Art had been elected president of the Assembly of Governmental Employees (AGE), a national coalition of independent unions.



New recruiters raring to go

MCEA is expecting to fatten its membership rolls with the hiring of two Recruiters. Sonjia Conaway comes to the union with a human resources background from a pharmaceutical firm, and Charles Jones comes with a human services background. Sonjia, who had worked on management's side, says she looks forward to advocating on behalf of employees. While working as a Housekeeper to help pay for his tuition at Morgan State, Charles helped organize contractual Housekeepers there to secure better working conditions. Both are personable with lots of knowledge and energy. To arrange for these go-getters to attend your chapter meetings or set up an MCEA Day, call them at Headquarters, 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA, ext. 222 (Sonjia) and ext. 220 (Charles).

300 State positions to be eliminated

As a cost containment measure, the General Assembly has adopted budget language limiting the number of permanent State government positions to 52,834, effective July 1, 2004. Andrea Fulton, Executive Director of the State Office of Personnel Services and Benefits, told the 155 MCEA members attending the annual Statewide Advisory Council meeting on May 17. This means approximately 300 positions must be abolished by June 30, with at least half of those required to be officials and administrators. Retirements between now and the end of the fiscal year will be considered, she said.

— See other side for more important information —

7127 Rutherford Road • Baltimore, MD 21244 • 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA • www.mcea.org

MCEA ... Our Most Important Job Is Yours!

Negotiations winding down

MCEA has completed collective bargaining negotiations for the Frostburg State University police officers and University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science non-exempt employees. The Memoranda of Understanding will not go into effect until they are signed by the institution presidents and ratified by bargaining unit employees and USM Board of Regents. Harford County employees ratified a contract, which features 98-percent county-paid health insurance, a 1% pay raise, and triple pay on certain holidays.

Governor signs retiree task force bill

On May 26, Governor Ehrlich signed the last batch of bills passed by the General Assembly this year. Legislation includes SB 548, which creates a post retirement health benefits trust fund to subsidize health insurance for employees and retirees; HB 891, which requires that a member of the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System have at least 25 and less than 30 years of creditable service to participate in the deferred retirement option program (DROP); and HB 1057, which makes administrative changes to the way the Board of Trustees for the State Retirement and Pension System operates.



State requesting bids for medical benefits

The Office of Personnel Services and Benefits is sending out Requests for Proposals for a PPO dental plan, as well as medical care plans for PPO, POS, and HMOs, and the prescription drug program. Andrea Fulton said employees and retirees can expect adjustments to the prescription drug plan, which she says has “unbelievably low” co-pays.

Scholarship applications available

June 30 is the deadline to apply for an MCEA Wallace F. Smith Scholarship. Members and their dependents are eligible. For an application, contact Barbara Mitchell at 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA, ext. 204.

4 members nominated to Board

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Sandy Ratke, has kicked off the election process as four positions will become available on the Board of Directors this fall. The committee nominated

Linda Day, president of Chapter 45, Baltimore City Department of Social Services; Allen Evans, president of Chapter 97, Charles County Health Department (who was recently elected 2nd VP); Marilyn Miller (who was elected Secretary); and Lonnie Sleaster, president of Chapter 10, Hagerstown Correctional Complex.

If you missed the nominating deadline to run for the board (term to expire 2006), don't fret. You may go through the petitioning process. To get your name on the ballot, you must collect 200 signatures of members, with the last four digits of their Social Security numbers. A copy of the chapter meeting minutes that show a motion approving your candidacy was made, seconded, and passed must accompany your petition. Petitions must be received at Headquarters on or before July 1. For details on the petitioning process, refer to the MCEA Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 3. Call Barbara Mitchell at MCEA Headquarters with any questions you have.

Upcoming dates: mark your calendars

- June 2, Area II Meeting, 6:30 p.m. MCEA Headquarters. Area Governor elections will be held.
- June 4, Orioles Baseball. Bullpen party 5:30 p.m. Game time 7:05 p.m. Tickets \$32. Call Barbara Mitchell at MCEA, 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA, ext. 204.
- June 5, Delmarva Shorebirds Baseball, Perdue Stadium. All you can eat picnic 6:30 p.m., game 7:05 p.m. Tickets \$26. Call 410-749-9135 or 1-888-610-MCEA for ticket information.
- June 17, Board of Directors meeting, 7 p.m., MCEA Headquarters.
- July 24, Frederick Keys Baseball, Harry Grove Stadium. Picnic 6 p.m., game 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$28. Contact Lonnie Sleaster, Chapter 10 President, at 301-766-9319 or lsleaster@high-stream.net.
- Aug. 7, Hagerstown Suns Baseball, Municipal Stadium. Tickets \$14. Picnic 6 p.m., game 7:30 pm. Call Lonnie Sleaster.
- Aug. 21, Cruise on the Bay Lady, 11:30 p.m. – 2 a.m. Baltimore Inner Harbor. Tickets \$30. Call Barbara Mitchell at MCEA Headquarters or Joan Queen, Memorial Scholarship Chair, at 301-860-4190.

