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March/April 2010

# The APA

# NEWSLETTER

*The Official Newsletter for the Administrative Professional Association of MSU*  
MSU Administrative-Professional Association MEA/NEA/1480 Kendale Blvd, Suite 300/East Lansing MI 48823/(517) 353-4898

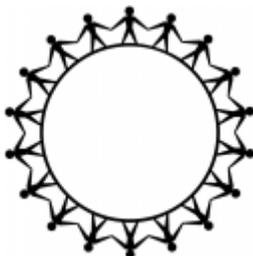
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## MSU APA Names Area Representatives

More members getting involved in the work of the union!

by Maury Koffman

President/Chairperson, MSU APA



One key to having an active, engaged, and informed union is through a vibrant Area Representative structure. With that in mind, over the last fourteen months, the APA has been striving to identify and train potential APA Area Representatives.

Culminating at the 2010 January APA monthly meeting, the first group of APA Area Representatives was appointed by the APA President with the concurrence of the APA Executive Board.

The following APA members were appointed as APA Area Representatives: **Nick Bourland, Jean Chisnel, Larry Farmer, Ramiro Gonzales, Sean Leahy, Aaron Ledger, Vivian Leung, Deb Porter, Leo Sell, Deborah Sudduth Garland, Vikki Tormala, Timo Vasquez, and Rachel Zakhem.** Specific zones for individual Area Representatives have yet to be determined but contact information will be available at [www.msuapa.org](http://www.msuapa.org) under the "About" header.

Part of the efforts of the current Area Reps will be to review the trainings they received over the last fourteen months, help improve the training process, identify other potential Area Reps, and encourage activism in the APA.

If you are interested in serving as an APA Area Rep,

please contact APA Membership Committee chair, Vikki Tormala, at [tormala@msu.edu](mailto:tormala@msu.edu).

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## 2010 Association Elections

### MEA Region Election

Election Dates: March 2-9

### APA Executive Board Election

### MEA/NEA Delegate Election

Election Dates: March 18-31

by the APA Nominations and Elections Committee



March is a critical month for members of the APA. Members will have the opportunity to exercise their basic right of full, dues paying membership by voting in two elections – MEA Region Election (March 2-9) and APA Executive Board and MEA/NEA Delegate Election (March 18-31). Both elections will be by electronic means. (A paper ballot will be made available upon request for the APA election. Please contact Sean Leahy, 2010 Nominations Elections Committee Chairperson – [leahysea@msu.edu](mailto:leahysea@msu.edu).)

This year's MEA Region Election includes a candidate from our own local, Sean Leahy. Sean is a candidate for MEA Region 50 delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly. He serves on the APA Executive Board and is also our current elections chair. (Please note that the MEA Region Election is held separate and apart from the APA Executive Board Election. They do not share a common data base.)

"As a delegate who has attended the NEA RA [Representative Assembly], I understand the importance of union involvement on many levels; not just within our local at MSU," states Sean. "We need to make certain

that our needs and concerns at MSU are taken beyond the campus and state and on to the national level.”

So that you may continue to exercise your rights as a full member of the MSU APA, you may go to <https://www.mymea.org/olinevoting/> and cast your vote. On the login, enter your first name (legal first name), last name and the last four digits of your Social Security number. Click the “Login” button and the system will walk you through the rest. This is a secured site where all information is confidential. (If you have any problems using the MEA Online Voting application, contact MEA IT Department at 337-5440. The phone is staffed from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday through Friday.) Voting will close at 11:59 p.m., March 9.

Per the APA Constitution and Bylaws, *the annual APA Executive Board election shall be conducted by March 31 of each year.* By this time, you should have already received an email notification (via APA ListServ on February 12, 2010) soliciting nominations—which have now closed—and providing notice of the **APA Executive Board and MEA/NEA Delegate election with voting set to commence March 18 and conclude at 4:30 p.m., March 31.** (See submitted candidate bios at the end of this newsletter.)

Each year, the APA Nominations and Elections Committee work diligently to operate an efficient, accurate, and transparent election in compliance with the APA Constitution and Bylaws. In doing so, the Committee has established a public testing of the ballot on March 15, 2010. There will also be a public tabulation and announcement of election results on March 31, 2010.

Both public election events are open to full members of the APA and will commence at 5:30 p.m. at the APA Association Office, located at the MEA building at 1480 Kendale Blvd., Suite 300, East Lansing.

## APA Professional Development Session

### “Know Your Union Rights and Your Rights as a Unionized Worker!”

Each issue of the MSU APA Newsletter includes a section highlighting parts of our current contract. While knowing your rights with respect to your working conditions at MSU are important, it is equally as important to know what state and national laws govern your rights as a unionized worker.

On **Wednesday, March 10**, MEA General Counsel Art Przybylowicz will talk about union rights under state and federal law. This APA Lunch & Learn session will be

held from **noon-1 p.m., in the Spartan Rooms of the International Center, located on the MSU campus.** For those staying for the entire session, a lunch voucher will be given along with your attendance.

## Know Your Contract!

### Know Your Contract

#### Article 14: Filling Vacant Positions



It's on a lot of people's minds these days...layoffs and call backs. What happens when they occur and what's the selection process when it comes to filling vacant positions at MSU?

The following is the language we have governing the APA contract.

-103 The recruitment of applicants and the filling of vacant positions is the responsibility of the Employer. All candidates who possess the posted qualifications shall be considered to advance the concept of promotion from within the ranks of the University. Human Resource Services will provide the employing department with a list of candidates. In any instance when bargaining unit candidates possess the posted qualifications, at least five (5) of said candidate, if available, shall be interviewed.

-104 The responsibility for determining which candidates shall be interviewed will reside with the employing department. This determination will be based upon information obtained from the candidates' credentials. The department should take longevity of service into account when determining who will be interviewed, but ability to do the work shall be the prime factor for setting the interview list.

-105 If any outside candidate is hired over an interviewed employee or an interviewed employee on layoff status, the Association shall be provided with a copy of the Position Vacancy Record, which will contain the reasons for selection and nonselection. This shall be done in a timely manner. If the procedures outlined above have been followed, the determination will not be grievable; however, the Association may request a Special Conference to discuss the issue.

-106 Employees will be given reasonable time off from their jobs for the purpose of interviewing for another University position. Arrangements must be made in advance with their supervisor.

## Hints for Dress for Success for Men & Women

**You've got an interview, now what?**

by Cynthia Schneider

Vice President/Vice Chairperson, MSU APA



*In January (01/21/10), HRD presented a noontime APA information session at the International Center which highlighted the education benefit and opportunities offered to MSU support staff. After speaking with representatives Edita Herbstova and Kaye Boucher, it came to light that not only is education important for the job and resume but, "appearance" is equally as important for the face-to-face interview. This follow-up article gives some pointers on dressing for an interview.*

It's probably one of the most overused phrases in job-hunting, but also one of the most underutilized by job-seekers: dress for success. In job-hunting, first impressions are critical. Remember, you are marketing a product -- yourself -- to a potential employer, and the first thing the employer sees when greeting you is your attire; thus, you must make every effort to have the proper dress for the type of job you are seeking.

This also applies also when seeking to move within departments at MSU. If you are seeking to interview for potential job opportunities within the University, dressing appropriately for an interview is a must. Will dressing properly get you the job? Of course not, but it will give you a competitive edge and a positive first impression.

Should you be judged by what you wear? Perhaps not, but the reality is, of course, that you are judged. Throughout the entire job-seeking process employers use short-cuts or rules of thumb to save time. With cover letters, it's the opening paragraph and a quick scan of your qualifications. With resumes, it is a quick scan of your accomplishments. With the job interview, it is how you're dressed that sets the tone of the interview.

How should you dress? Dressing conservatively is

always the safest route, but you should also try and do a little investigating of your prospective employer/department so that what you wear to the interview makes you look as though you fit in with the organization. If you "under-dress" a potential employer may feel that you don't care enough about the job.

You don't need to spend a lot of money for high-end interview clothes. But you should make sure you have at least two professional sets of attire.

Attention to details is crucial, so here are some tips for both men and women. Make sure you have:

- clean and polished conservative dress shoes
- cleaned and trimmed fingernails
- minimal cologne or perfume
- no gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth
- minimal jewelry

Finally, check your attire in the rest room just before your interview for a final check of your appearance.

## Put Your Ed Assist Dollars to Work!

Following HRD classes have openings:

Thursday, March 11, 8:30 am – noon (Free)  
[Communicating In Times Of Change](#)  
 Presenter: Lew Dotterer

Wednesdays, March 17 and 24, 8:30-4:30  
 (\$265) [Leading Process Improvement](#)  
 Presenter: Adrian Bass.

Thursday, March 25, 1-4:30 (\$115) [Optimizing Your Outlook: Time Management Strategies for Busy Outlook Users](#)  
 Presenter: Randy Dean

**MSU Tuition Waiver application deadline for Summer 2010:** If you plan to use MSU Tuition Waiver for the Summer 2010 semester, please submit your application to HRD by **March 19**. Questions? Please contact Julie Rorick ([Rorick@hr.msu.edu](mailto:Rorick@hr.msu.edu) or 4-0177).

For a complete list of upcoming HRD courses, go to the MSU Human Resources website at [www.hr.msu.edu](http://www.hr.msu.edu) . Click on "Faculty & Staff Development Training."

## 2010 APA Executive Board 2010 MEA/NEA Delegate Nominees & Biographies

\*(B)=Denotes incumbent/current board member.

### Jean Chisnell (B) EHS/ORCBS/Health Physicist II

I have worked on campus for over 30 years and been a member of a union for most of that time.

For 16 years I worked as Field Research Technician in Crop and Soil Sciences in sugar beet research. For several years I served as chair of the Health and Safety Committee of the CTU.

A promotion to Health Physicist in the Office of Radiation, Chemical & Biological Safety brought me into the APA, where I have been for the past 20 years. Visiting labs as part of my job allows me to see many of our members face-to-face and hear the concerns and problems of a worker at MSU today. I think this is an asset as I see members in many departments and buildings on campus.

Serving of the board of the APA has been an enlightening and enjoyable experience. I have been fortunate to be able to participate in many of the trainings available, and I served on the Negotiation team during our last contract. Most importantly, I want all our members to feel they have a voice and an impact in our union and our workplace.

### Deborah J. Sudduth Garland College of Nursing, Dean's Office/Executive Staff Assistant

Fellow APA members, I am seeking your support to continue to serve the membership of APA and MEA/NEA. Currently, I have been appointed by the APA Executive Board as an Area Representative. My request is to serve you as a member of the APA Executive Board and as an MEA/NEA delegate.

I have been actively interested in working within the APA association since becoming a member in January 2007. I recently completed APA/MEA SPARKS training to be better informed as an APA Area Representative. I have been employed by MSU for almost 25 years and am a second generation MSU union/associations employee. I have been active in campus union/associations for 13+ years (CTU/1987-1988 and APSA/1995-2006).

I look forward to sharing my knowledge and experience with my fellow APA members. I especially look forward to serving the APA members to the best of my ability by listening to your concerns and comments. I will work hard for you and with Executive Board to maintain our current union negotiated benefits. Thank you for your support!

### Aaron M. Ledger Administrative Information Services/ Information Technologist I

My name is Aaron Ledger and I am running for APA Executive board and MEA/NEA delegate seats. I have been employed by MSU for 3 years with AIS. I grew up in union family. My mother was a union steward for UAW local 602. During my time here, I've had the privilege to work with members of our union all across campus. What I discovered was a general apathy towards the APA. I started attending informational sessions and meet-and-greets to see what could be done to fix it. Eventually, I was nominated to attend a retreat organized by the MEA called SPARKS.

The training I received at SPARKS taught me the important role a union plays for all of its members. After the retreat, I became an Area Representative for the APA so I could become the face of the union for every member I come in contact with. I believe that the board would benefit from some new energy and ideas. I also believe that the MEA has a lot to offer all of us and I want to serve as your voice in that organization. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you.

### Debra Porter (B) Institute of Water Research/Administrative Assistant II

I have been working in budget and/or grant administration for the past 14 years with MSU. The need for unions and the work they do became very clear while employed with another organization. When I was hired at MSU I called the APA union to find out how I could become involved and have been ever since serving as a board member, delegate, or committee chair.

Some people ask if our union is necessary. Yes today it is very necessary and needed. We all know in the past unions lead the fight for better working conditions, wages, health care, vacations etc., however today our fight is a little more subtle. Because we have great benefits we have become complacent here on campus. We may not realize our fight is about keeping our

benefits and stopping our jobs from becoming privatized. This fight may not touch us today or tomorrow, but it is coming and when gets here, I know I will be on the frontline fighting for all of my bothers and sisters making sure they have a voice.

**Cynthia Schneider (B)**  
**Human Resources/Comm Manager I**

Cynthia Schneider has been employed at MSU since 1989, working in the area of Communications and Public Relations. She has served on the MSU APA executive board since 1997 and as vice chair since 2005. During this time, her duties have included bargaining team member for several contracts, board representative for the Coalition of Labor Organizations, MEA and NEA delegate to our governance conventions, member of MEA Board of Directors, Region 8H Coordinating Council co-chair, and member of the Joint Health Care Committee, which monitors our health care costs with our insurance vendors and the University.

Cynthia is also active on the APA Grievance Committee and serves as chair of the Communications Committee. She says, *"In my many years with the MSU APA executive board I have grown as a leader in practical hands-on experience as well as continuing to take on new challenges such as the MEA Board of Directors. All of these opportunities have helped me become a better advocate for all of our members."*

**Vikki Sue Tormala (B)**  
**University Physician's Office/Information  
Technologist II**

Vikki has been employed with the University since 2002. She has been an active APA board member for over five years. In addition, she has also served as APA Membership Chair for over a year. As Membership chair she established the framework for the Area Representative Program. In her role she is committed to assisting members understand the benefits of APA membership and its affiliation with MEA/NEA. Plus *"APA members possess a diversity of talents and skills that are essential to the growth and success of the University. During these challenging economic times I would like to continue to encourage and empower APA members to further develop their skills so that they can be of a greater asset to the MSU community. As an APA board member I would be in a capacity to do so in a far more reaching level."*

**APA Executive Board****PRESIDENT/CHAIRPERSON**

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*\*Executive Board meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of each month commencing at 2:00 p.m. in the APA office located at 1480 Kendale, Suite 300, East Lansing. Visiting members should call in advance to verify the time and place.*

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