

APA November/December 2014 Newsletter

Vote For Candidates That Support Public Education, Labor, and the Middle Class

by Maury Koffman, APA President

The 2014 election cycle is proving once again that voters connected to public education are effective and credible messengers when it comes to pointing out to individuals and entire communities those candidates who are going to fight for students and public schools and universities.

With education issues dominating the public debate in several key races nationwide, ads featuring educators are flooding the television airwaves and teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff have been extremely vocal about what our students and we need to be successful.

However, knowing who these candidates are is not enough. We must now get out and vote for them on Tuesday, November 4, and encourage others to do the same. That's the message NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia is carrying to members and pro-public education activists as she visits several key battleground states, including a stop here in Michigan.

“Those connected to public education have spent this election cycle identifying to neighbors, friends, and family members who the real education champions are—those candidates committed to standing up for students and members at the local, state, and federal levels.”

“However, our job is not done. We must encourage those who care about these issues to get out and vote. Together, our collective voice can breathe new life into the goal of making sure that quality public schools and a college degree are accessible to every student, regardless of where they live or how much money they have.”

TAKE ACTION: Education cuts to budgets in places like Arizona, Florida, Maine, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin have been exceptionally detrimental to our members and our students. With that being the case, President Eskelsen Garcia is asking all voters to get involved in raising the issue of education when they get out to vote on November 4th.

Hop on your favorite social media and take a picture at the polls, share your Education Voter story, or simply tell your friends to go vote for pro-public education candidates using the hashtag #Vote4Ed.

How Do I Get a Raise?

by *Melissa Sortman, MEA Uniserv Director*

One of the highest ranked concerns of any professional employee group is wages, and APA is no different. Your bargained contract provides numerous ways your salary can be increased in addition to your established benefits and other compensation. The More You Know Session: How do I get a raise will be held on November 14, 2014 at noon. Please rsvp to htraxler@mea.org to attend.

Bargained Wage Increase

APA and the Coalition of Labor Organizations (CLO) at MSU bargain collectively a wage and health care agreement that includes across the board wage increases. The current agreement runs through December 31, 2017.

<http://www.msuapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/MOU-2014-2017.pdf>

The current APA Contract runs through September 30, 2015. Under the APA the contract, there will be a two percent (2%) wage increase on October 1, 2014. There will be an additional two and a half percent (2.5%) wage increase on October 1, 2015. The wage increase will be distributed according to the 60% merit and 40% across-the-board formula found in Article 17 of the APA Contract and the Letter of Agreement on Merit Guidelines. All wage increase funds allocated to a unit must be distributed to members in the bargaining unit.

<http://www.msuapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/APA2011-2015.pdf>

Salary Progression Level Increase

The APA Contract provides an automatic increase for those members whose wages are below the Progression Level amounts found in Article 17 IV of the contract. Each January eligible employees shall receive a three percent (3%) increase up to the Progression Level amount.

Off Schedule Merit Salary Increase

A unit can give a raise at any time for any amount. It is called an off-schedule merit salary raise. There are no maximum salaries for any grade level. There is no contractual restriction on a member receiving a raise and a member can request a raise at any time. Requesting a raise during the annual review period is particularly appropriate.

Reclassification

Job duties for a member's current position may change enough to require a reclassification of their position. The salary for position reclassified and promoted to a higher grade level can be no lower than the minimum salary for the higher grade level. A reclassification for a position is typically requested through the unit administrator, but the APA can request a review through the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources. The Office of Resource Staffing Services reviews the requests for reclassification.

Promotion

A change to a higher grade level as a promotion under the APA Contract requires a minimum of a five percent (5%) wage increase for one grade level increased and ten percent (10%) for two or more levels increased or placed at the minimum of the higher grade level, whichever is greater. The provisions of a promotion can be found in Article 15 of the APA Contract.

Equity Review

An equity review can be requested to bring a member's wages in line with other individuals in the unit and/or on campus with similar years of University service and job classification. Contact Human Resources Staffing Service Office at 353-3720.

Please contact the APA Office with any further questions or concerns at (517) 353-4898 or msuapa@msu.edu.

Questions From The Trenches

For this installment of APA Questions From The Trenches, we asked APA President Maury Koffman to answer questions regarding the APA 2014 October wage increase.

How much is the negotiated APA annual wage increase this year for 2014?

The APA negotiated annual wage increase is applied every year in October. For the 2014 year, the APA annual base wage increase is 2%. Per the APA contract, 40% of the wage increase is automatic – across the board – and 60% applies the merit pay guidelines that require objective and consistent application. Your immediate supervisor should also provide advance notice of you annual wage increase amount before it is realized on your October 2014 paycheck.

How is the merit pay portion of the wage increase determined?

The APA contract codifies a mandatory objective process in determining the merit pay portion of the APA annual wage increase. The full details can be found within the Letter of Agreement on Merit Pay located at the end of the APA contract. In short, the criteria must be openly communicated and objectively applied in the department. Additionally, the decision on merit pay allocation is to be discussed between you and your immediate supervisor before your October 2014 paycheck is issued.

Does the APA contract define a minimum and maximum annual salary for all members of the bargaining unit?

Yes and no. The APA contract outlines minimum salary requirements for all grade levels within the bargaining unit. However, the APA contract serves as a floor and individual bargaining unit salaries may rise above the APA minimums and progression levels. Per Clause 132 of the APA contract:

Salary Progression increase consideration [annual 3% maximum] will be given to employees who have completed at least one (1) year of service on the effective date of the increase, whose current performance is determined to be not less than satisfactory, and whose salary is less than one hundred twenty-five (125%) percent of the minimum hiring level.

What is the APA base wage increase in future years?

The following annual base wage increases are subject to the APA contract provisions of 40% across the board and 60% using the merit pay process:

October 2014 – 2% base wage increase

October 2015 – 2.5% base wage increase

October 2016 – 2.6% maximum base wage increase through matrix formula

October 2017 – 2.6% maximum base wage increase through matrix formula

October 2018 – 2.6% maximum base wage increase through matrix formula

How does the matrix formula work to determine my annual base wage increase?

The matrix in the ratified agreement defines the formula for the annual APA raises commencing with the October 2015 base wage increase. For example using the matrix, because health care costs increase between 1.01% – 2% in the first year of the agreement, APA members are eligible for a 2.5% base wage increase in October 2015, subject to the contract provisions of 40% across the board and 60% using the merit pay process. The complete matrix can be found within the ratified agreement which is conveniently located on the APA website:

<http://www.msuapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/MOU-2014-2017.pdf>

Your Fellow APs

Interview by Laura Wise, APA Executive Board

This issue of the APA Newsletter features Kaye L. Boucher. She serves as Human Resources Administrator in the Veterinary Medicine Dean's Office

How long have you been at MSU?

I will be celebrating nine years with MSU at the end of this month. I am very appreciative that I had the opportunity to work as a human resources specialist in the central Human Resources office for my first seven years with the University. This role allowed me to gain a broad perspective of University operations and build valued relationships with a network of human resources and business professionals across the University. Two years ago, I was excited to be offered the opportunity to join the College of Veterinary Medicine in a human resources generalist role. This position allows me to build upon and broaden my knowledge and skills across all areas of human resources.

Have you been a member of APA the whole time?

Yes, I have been an APA member for the full nine years. My role in human resources has allowed me to appreciate my APA membership from a different perspective than most members. In my role, I have had the opportunity to work with and witness the passion that the APA leadership has for its members and the MSU community. I have had the opportunity to partner with Maury Koffman to make sure a member receives the best possible placement opportunity after a layoff. I have worked with Nick Bourland on the winter coat drive to benefit the MSU community, and I have had difficult, yet respectful, conversations with Melissa Sortman to make sure we have a mutually beneficial outcome for the APA member and the department.

Can you tell me a little bit about what you do?

As human resources manager for the College of Veterinary Medicine, I partner with college leadership and unit human resources and business officers to develop and implement human resources programs, policies and procedures that support the mission and strategic direction of the college. This includes serving as an internal consultant to faculty, staff and administrators in areas relating to employee relations, recruitment, performance management, employee development, compensation, work flow and process analysis, regulatory compliance and other human resources programs, policies and initiatives.

What brought you to your job at MSU?

I grew up in the greater Lansing area and graduated from Michigan State, so I already had a strong affiliation with MSU and understood the broad impact it had on the community and beyond. There was no question that working for MSU would be a source of pride for me.

What do you love about working at MSU?

There are so many things to note, but it is all about the range and diversity of opportunities, such as the opportunity to:

- work in a supportive environment that promotes work/life balance
- participate in training for career development/advancement and access e-learning programs 24 hours per day, 7 days a week
- work among leading scholars, scientists and researchers
- take a scenic walk through campus on your lunch hour or participate in Health4U programs
- join your co-workers in supporting special needs on campus or reaching out to the community
- collaborate with colleagues across campus to improve a process or reach a common goal

What do you like to do when you are not at work?

I am a home body, so I enjoy taking care of my home and spending time with my husband, three boys, and extended family. Many of our gatherings or weekend getaways are centered around sporting events, including MSU and community athletic events, watching hockey, and playing golf.

Election Links & Resources

[MEA's Online Voter Guide](#)

Plug in your address and you'll get your polling place and the MEA-recommended candidates for your area. This link should only be shared with MEA members and family. It is also available on MEA.org's Members Only Political Action page, along with a more comprehensive list of local recommendations. It is also available in the new MEA mobile app.

www.KidsNotCEOs.com

Here you can find the total four-year cost for every K-12 district, community college and university, along with several Kids Not CEOs videos.

[2014 Kids Not CEOs viral video](#)

Our latest satirical video about the CEOs benefitting from Snyder's education cuts – more than 10,000 views thus far!

[The Truth About School Funding](#)

MEA Labor Economist Ruth Beier explains the math on school funding cuts in less than three minutes, including some great visuals.

[What Did You Learn in School Today, Mr. Schauer?](#)

Back in June, Mark Schauer visited Macomb County's Armada High School to shadow students and experience Michigan public education first-hand. This is a great video to introduce members to Mark Schauer and help them understand his sincerity in making education Michigan's top priority.

www.meavotes.org

This is MEA's new online contribution site for MEA-PAC and the NEA Fund.

[Volunteering for the Coordinated Campaign](#)

Looking to help get Mark Schauer and the rest of our ticket elected? Visit here to submit your name as a volunteer or to find one of the more than 20 coordinated campaign offices near you. You can also go to www.mea.org and click on the Election 2014 Volunteer icon to get your name in to help with campaigns.