

APA March/April 2015 Newsletter

What The APA Has Done For Me Lately: Wages & Healthcare

by Maury Koffman, APA President

Look around you. While fully funded health care is a cultural norm at MSU, with no out-of-pocket monthly premium, few places of employment offer the same quality of care and access as bargained by our union for members on campus. But, our benefits did not come without a fight.

In the last round of contract negotiations, the University spent months trying to jam through what they called a 'consumer driven health care plan.' In function, what it meant was a high deductible plan that would have required members to pay the first \$4,000 for single coverage or \$8,000 for family coverage before insurance would kick in.

Additionally, they were pushing for a total elimination of prescription drug coverage and a 20% co-insurance for all costs above the deductible. That co-insurance would have meant that in a catastrophic medical incident that cost \$250,000, the individual would suffer a second injury when hit with a \$50,000 co-insurance health care bill. I don't know about you, but I'm not familiar with any APA member who could absorb an \$8,000 deductible, let alone a \$50,000 medical bill, without it drastically impacting the member's life.

In addition to fully funded health care through December 31, 2017, the APA is proud to have negotiated wage increases each year and additional lump sum bonuses. The APA contractually negotiated salaries work as a floor and there is no ceiling. The intention is to ensure all union members receive recognition for their contributions on campus by guaranteeing a wage increase.

In 2014, APA members received an October 2% base wage increase and an additional lump sum payment of \$1,032 earlier in that year in January. For most members, that equated to roughly a 4% wage enhancement in 2014.

In 2015, APA members are slated to receive a January lump sum payment of \$961 and an October base wage increase of 2.5%, yet again equating to another 4% wage enhancement in one year.

We all have a passion and love for MSU. And we all want to believe that the University will do right by its employees. The harsh reality is that MSU is still an employer, with a billion dollar annual budget, and the union is the only way to balance the power and have an equal voice to ensure a fair and equitable workplace.

A strong union with an active membership is our only opportunity to have a forum that compels MSU to engage us and address member benefits and concerns.

If you ask me, our union dues are a great bargain when compared to my wage increases each year, lump sum bonuses, fully funded health care, and a vibrant 403(b) retirement program among many other benefits.

Again I say, look around you. Where unions don't exist or have reduced power, the benefits we realize at MSU are not even a consideration. I cherish what my union has negotiated for me. It impacts my life everyday. And that's why I am so proud to be a member of the APA.

APA Election Information

[Election Results can be found here.](#)

Open ballot testing March 10, 2015 at 5:15pm at APA Office, 3474 Alaiedon Parkway, Suite 400, Okemos, MI 48864.

Voting Opens March 19 through 5:00pm March 31, 2015

Voting will be done electronically. APA members will receive information on voting via the official APA ListServ. Please watch our email for important election information.

Candidate Bio's are listed below. Please note that for this election, all candidates are running for both the APA Executive Board and the MEA/NEA/RA Delegate positions.

Five (5) seats on the APA Executive Board with terms ending in 2018

Five (5) seats on the MEA/NEA/RA Delegate with terms ending in 2018

Candidate Bio's:

Current Executive Board Members and MEA/NEA RA Delegates are reflected with a (B) incumbent indicator in front of their name.

Candidate Name: (B) Nicholas (Nick) Bourland

Employing Unit: Human Resources Asst Vice President (Release position, currently serving as MSU Administrative Professional Assoc. Vice President)

Number of Years in the APA Union: 8

Number of Years Employed at Michigan State University: 16

Candidate Email Address: bourlan2@gmail.com

Candidate Name: Danny Layne

Employing Unit: Residential & Hospitality Services

Number of Years in the APA Union: 18

Number of Years Employed at Michigan State University: 20

Candidate Email Address: danny@msu.edu

Candidate Name: (B) Erica Phillipich

Employing Unit: Student Health Services

Number of Years in the APA Union: 7

Number of Years Employed at Michigan State University: 7

Candidate Email Address: erica.phillipich@hc.msu.edu

Candidate Name: (B) Leo Sell

Employing Unit: IT Services

Number of Years in the APA Union: 23

Number of Years Employed at Michigan State University: 23

Candidate Email Address: lsell@msu.edu

Candidate Name: (B) Dennis Seybert

Employing Unit: University Services, Purchasing

Number of Years in the APA Union: 4

Number of Years Employed at Michigan State University: 13

Candidate Email Address: seybert@msu.edu.

Candidate Name: (B) Laura Wise

Employing Unit: International Studies and Programs

Number of Years in the APA Union: 4

Number of Years Employed at Michigan State University: 4

Candidate Email Address: LauraW@msu.edu

Know Your Contract – Am I eligible for another annual raise?

by Melissa Sortman, MEA Uniserv Director

The APA bargains a base level wage increase which is applied each October. It is a forty-percent (40%) guaranteed increase and a sixty-percent (60%) merit increase. In October 2014, the potential wage increase was two (2%) percent. In January 2015, APA bargained a lump sum payout of about one-thousand dollars (~\$1,000). A member may also be eligible for an Automatic Progression Level (APL) wage increase each year.

The APA bargained a maximum additional APL three-percent (3%) annual raise to increase the salaries of those members who were hired below the progression level wage.

The Salary Progression Program can be found in Article 17 Clause 132-137 and the specific progression level wages for the contract year in Clause 145 (www.msuapa.org). The Automatic Progression Level (APL) is based on the grade level and current wage. The grade level directly correlates to your classification title. Unfortunately, the grade level is not on your pay stub. The grade level of your position can be found by calling the APA office or MSU Human Resources.

To be eligible for the APL raise, you must have one year of service and your performance must not be less than satisfactory. It is not a requirement to have been annually evaluated, but you may not have an unsatisfactory evaluation. APA bargains the minimum wage for each grade level and the progression level wage. Each year, both wage thresholds increase by the amount of the full potential base wage increase. For the 2014-2015 contract year, the base level wage increase was two percent (2%).

If your wage for your grade level is under the Progression Level Wage in the chart below, you are eligible for the APL wage increase. The APL raise is applied on your first-year anniversary date and each subsequent year in January.

Article 17, Clause 145

-145 Effective October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015, the Minimum Hiring and Automatic Progression Level rates are:

Grade Level	Minimum	Progression Level
8	\$32,415	\$40,519
9	\$35,022	\$43,778
10	\$37,809	\$47,261
11	\$40,851	\$51,064
12	\$44,112	\$55,140
13	\$47,626	\$59,533
14	\$51,434	\$64,293
15	\$55,550	\$69,438
16	\$59,990	\$74,988
17	\$64,791	\$80,989

Your Fellow APs

Interview by Laura Wise, APA Executive Board

This month's newsletter features Dajuan Wiley, Intramural Coordinator at the IM Sports West.

How long have you been at MSU?

I started working for MSU on August 11, 2014 and have been a member of the APA since joining MSU.

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

My job responsibilities range from assisting with the hiring process, managing and training student employees. Also I am responsible for all building operations in the evening.

What brought you to your job at MSU?

One highlight in my life is being fortunate enough to participate in Division 1 Sports at MSU. I played basketball under Coach Tom Izzo from 1996 to 1998. I earned an undergraduate degree in Recreation from MSU in 2006 while working at the IM West part-time. Loved it at the IM West then and love it now!

What do you love about working at MSU?

The best part about working for MSU is the youth. I love working with young people because they are always generating new ideas and fresh thoughts. Keeps you young!

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

When I'm not working, I love hanging out with my family and friends.

APA Night at the MSU College of Music Opera Theatre

****APA TICKETS SOLD OUT****

While APA event tickets have sold out, you may still attend on your own! Please visit <http://music.msu.edu/event-listing/handels-xerxes> to purchase tickets.

The APA is proud to announce a partnership with the MSU College of Music to extend an opportunity for members to attend MSU's Opera Theatre presentation of Handel's Xerxes on Wednesday, March 25th at 7:30pm at the beautifully renovated Fairchild Theatre.

A season of schemers, dreamers, and comedy: King Xerxes casts his eye on a young lady and decides he wants her for his queen causing a tangled web of mistaken identity, thwarted plots, and unrequited love. Sparkling with beautiful arias, what more could anyone want in an opera?

Sung in Italian with English surtitles. Director Melanie Helton will give a preview lecture 45 minutes before each performance.