A Word from the NCHE President

These are exciting times for the NEA higher education community. Our terrific organizing department recently organized the faculty at Harris-Stowe State University. We are pleased to announce that the overwhelming majority of the faculty at Harris-Stowe State University voted to authorize the Missouri National Education Association to represent all full-time regular faculty for the purpose of collective bargaining. Welcome Harris-Stowe to the NEA family.

Our organizing department continues its efforts throughout the United States. We currently have organizing drives in Maryland, Texas and New Hampshire.

The Campaign for the Future of Higher Education recently issued a series of papers on MOOCs (Massive Open On-Line Courses). The topical, well-researched pieces were widely distributed to the media, last week. A motivating factor for the development of the paper is to foster a investigated conversation on the impact MOOCs is having throughout California.

The NCHE Executive Committee held a successful planning retreat in September. We developed the following goals for the academic year, 2013-2014:

1) NCHE will increase its membership and visibility in and out of the NEA. The committee discuss several strategies for enhancing our visibility in the higher education community in and out of NEA.

2) NCHE bring forth resolutions, New Business Items and amendments to the legislative platform as appropriate. We are currently possible actions or resolutions on: MOOCs, an award for professor of the year, issues of importance to contingent faculty and the compositions of committee appointments.

3) NCHE will improve communication with the membership by enhancing the relevance of the newsletter, website, etc.

4) Improve the communication between NEA Board Members representing higher education and the NCHE executive committee.

Finally, the call for papers for this years’ NEA Higher Education Conference in Saint Louis, Missouri, on March 14-16, 2013 is out. Please consider applying.
Meet the NCHE Council Members
Executive Committee

Theresa Montaño, President,
a professor of Chicano Studies and Education at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), is the voice of the California Faculty Association and the Community College Association on the board of the California Teachers Association. Montaño was also on the staff of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), where she worked in professional development and as an area representative for nine years. She previously served for six years as an NEA board director, at large, higher education and is a member of NEA’s English Language Learners Culture and Equity Program. She served as the president of educational rights organizations such as the National Association for Multicultural Education and the California Association of Mexican-American Educators; as president of her local faculty association until her election to the Board of Directors for California Teachers Association, where she represents higher education members. Montaño lives in Los Angeles.

Beverly Stewart, Vice President,
a founding member of the Roosevelt Adjunct Faculty Organization (RAFO), Chicago, served as its president, secretary, and now communications chair. She serves the Illinois Education Association as chair of the Higher Education Council. She served as an at large member of the NCHE for three terms representing contingent faculty. She has been teaching English composition at Roosevelt University, Chicago, Illinois, since 1994 and teaches introduction to labor studies in an online course for the University of Illinois’ labor education program. She is earning her second master’s degree in Union Leadership and Administration at UMass, Amherst.

Cynthia Schneider, Secretary/ Treasurer, has a long history of union activism including work with her local and state organizations in Michigan. She has served in officer positions and as communications chair, developing many outreach programs that are still in use in her local today. Schneider has been with the Michigan State University support staff for nearly 25 years. Her current position is assistant director of Alumni and Donor Relations. She is a member of her state board of directors, liaison to the Michigan Association for Higher Education (MAHE) and assists with higher ed organizing efforts in her state. When she is not advocating for worker rights, she enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with her husband and working in her church and community.

Andrew D. Sako, Membership Chair, is current president of the Faculty Federation of Erie Community College and serves on the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) board of directors representing Community Colleges. On the national level, he represents NY state as a member of the National Educational Association’s board of directors, Advisory Committee on Membership and Higher Education subcommittee. As New York is a merged state, he also serves the American Federation of Teacher’s as a member of the Higher Education Program and Policy Council. He is a board member and trustee for Erie County’s Labor Management Health Fund as well as a board member for the NYSUT’s Member Benefits Corporation. Sako held the his local as vice president, divisional representative, and negotiations team member. He is a professor/ department chair of the Building Management/BUILDING Trades Department at Erie Community College since 1983.
Committee Members at Large

Catherine Leisek is a professor of visual arts at Broward College, Ft Lauderdale, Florida. Besides serving as NCHE director at large, Leisek is an NEA at-large board of director representing higher education. On a state level, she serves on the governance boards of the Florida Education Association and the United Faculty of Florida (UFF). She is a member of the executive committee of Broward College, UFF. Now a faculty senator, she served as its president. She also served her local chapter as president, chief negotiator, and grievance chair.

Loretta Ragsdell is a founding member of the City Colleges of Chicago Local Organizing Committee (CCCLOC). Now in her second three-year term, Ragsdell serves as CCCLOC’s vice-president and grievance chair. She is in her second term on the NCHE executive committee, has served two terms on Illinois’ Human and Civil Rights Committee. Ragsdell also serves as the secretary/treasurer of Illinois Education Association’s (IEA) Chicago Higher Education Region 67. Most recently, she was appointed as Interim Chair of IEA Region 67. A lifelong learner and proponent of education, Loretta is an English textbook author, a playwright, freelance journalist, and photographer. She is currently finishing her dissertation for her doctorate in Global and Comparative Education at Walden University.

DeWayne Sheaffer serves as Secretary for the Community College Association (CCA) in California, an affiliate of California Teachers Association (CTA). Sheaffer was a CCA board member representing CTA – Long Beach. He served a 4-year term as president for CTA Long Beach full-time. He also served as treasurer and campus representative. Sheaffer is a counseling faculty member at Long Beach City College. Very happy to serve as a member at large in the NCHE: “There is important work that must be done, and I am ready for the task at hand. It is indeed my pleasure to represent all of higher education members in the work that NCHE is committed to do.”

Susan Brown, a mathematics Instructor at Gadsden State Community College, serves as the Alabama Education Association Postsecondary President, a member of the NEA Membership Advisory Committee, the Vice-chair of the Alabama Teachers’ Retirement System Board of Control, a Trustee on the Alabama Teachers’ Health Insurance Board, an at-large higher education alternate for the NEA Board of Directors, and a former at-large higher education NEA Board Member. She served her state association in several positions. Brown serves as a member of the Executive Committee and Legislative Committee of the National Council on Teacher Retirement. Susan has more than thirty-four years of teaching experience.

Tell Us Your Stories

In an effort to represent and celebrate the work of NCHE members, the council welcomes stories and photos to post either in the eNewsletter, the print newsletter, or on our website once it is established. As send them to Beverly Stewart at bstewart1332@gmail.com. They may not all make it, but we will at least link them in the electronic versions of our publications.
Campus Equity Week: October 27-November 2, 2013

Campus Equity Week is an effort to draw attention to the inequities between contingent academic faculty and full-time tenured track faculty. Launched by the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor, a grassroots coalition of activists in North America working for contingent faculty members, the project aims at alerting the community about the disparities that contingent faculty face. Among those are inequitable salary differences between full-time and contingent academics, job insecurity, little to no support from schools, no voice in working conditions, no salary between semesters, no health insurance, no retirement, and no pay between terms.

Thanks to union efforts, adjunct, part-time, non-tenured, and graduate teaching faculty, have improved their conditions by forcing colleges and universities. The NEA awarded a $10,000 grant to the New Faculty Majority, which has blown new life into the biennial event. Several schools in Illinois will launch a letter writing campaign to the Department of Labor campaign to pressure the department to change how it defines “reasonable assurance” so that contingents who have

Davenport Award Nominations
Nominations for the 2014 Davenport Award are now open. The Award recognizes members who have dedicated their lives to higher education and to promote it through activism, locally and nationally. The deadline is January 13, 2013. The winner will be announced at the NEA Higher Education Conference, in St Louis, Missouri, set for March 14-16, 2013. The recipient receives a plaque and an honorarium of $250. Application forms are available at http://www.nea.org/home/32959.htm.

NCHE Business Matters
- The NCHE annual meeting is set for March 13, 2014.
- The open NCHE executive committee positions for the 2014–2016 terms are Secretary/Treasurer, Membership Chair, and two at–large council members.
- Amendments to the NCHE bylaws or constitution must be submitted by January 13, 2014, so that it can be published 30 days before the annual meeting, during which it will be presented, discussed, and voted on.

NCHE Council Establishes the Friend to Education Award
At its annual retreat in September, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) executive committee voted to establish the Friend to Education Award to be presented at the 2014 NEA Higher Education Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. The award acknowledges individuals who have “engaged in activities promoting higher education, advocating for the intellectual processes inherent in higher education, an advocating for student access.” The application form will be available on the NCHE website http://www.nea.org/home/32959.htm.

Winners will be honored at the annual NEA Higher Education Conference with a plaque. Their expenses for attending the conference are also covered as part of the award.

Criteria for consideration also include working in the community at large, developing and promoting legislation supportive of higher education and student access. The nominations are due January 13, 2014.