

UNION WINS MAJOR VICTORY IN BOARD ELECTION

by Alan Hall

On January 19, 1985, the NHCC United Faculty scored a major victory in helping to elect Don Stewart and Blaine Mann to the Board of Trustees. Unseated were longtime incumbents W. E. Crozier and Charles Philipp. Stewart and Mann were endorsed by the union, and our members worked hard in a strongly issues-oriented campaign to elect them. The issues generated a groundswell of enthusiastic community support which indicated that it was time for a change. A lot of support also came from faculty and students who were disenchanted with many of the previous Board's policies and actions.

The NHCC United Faculty would like to thank all those people who backed Stewart and Mann. Because of your efforts, we can expect more attention to the goals of building an excellent library, expanding computer-assisted student services, increasing the percentage of fulltime faculty, and bringing the administrators back to our campuses where they belong. These are goals which directly enhance the quality of education for our students, and that is why the union works for candidates who find such goals worthy. We are elated with this change and look forward to a future of significant improvement in the Board's leadership of the College.

A PLEA FOR NEW MEMBERS

by Olin Joynton

At times we union members wonder how much support for our efforts there is among the faculty at large. Occasionally faculty members have strongly disagreed with our stands. But during the recent board campaign we were gratified by many expressions of support from well-wishers among our nonunion colleagues. Some of you handed out literature on election day. Some of you contributed money to the campaign funds of union-endorsed candidates. Some of you provided sage advice on which issues to stress. Many of you gave us words of encouragement beforehand and congratulations afterwards.

Now we ask you to join us. During five years the NHCC United Faculty has proven itself to be a viable advocate for our professional interests in the quality of education we give to our students. In defending these interests it is not our style to tiptoe around, hoping to please everyone, and then wring our hands when little gets done. Nor, however, do we define ourselves as adversarial: before the last bond election Dr. Airola appealed to then-President Kevin Bailey for support, and the union delivered it. Union members work hard with and for the system, investing their time beyond teaching duties to serve on committees, to hold leading positions in the Faculty Senate, to sponsor student organizations, and to present and publish their research in scholarly forums. We do this from a sense of pride in being associated with the College.

To continue this sense of pride, faculty members can do more by working together for common interests than as individuals. The union offers this and a high degree of independence as well. Every project undertaken by the NHCC United Faculty is initiated and directed solely by our own officers and members. We think that many faculty members now are more interested than usual in a strong, independent organization like the union. We hope that our well-wishers will make the commitment to become members.

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I spent election day working for the Stewart, Hickey, and Mann campaign. For nearly three hours I handed out flyers to voters as they approached their polling place, and working next to me for the incumbents was a former member of the NHCC Board of Trustees. I approached him with a note of caution, since you are never sure what kind of reaction you will get from a person you have sued in federal court. To my surprise and relief, I found this individual to be very friendly, charming, and pleasant to work next to. Even more surprising was how we came to agree with each other on most subjects as we spent our time conversing about the College and its future. One thing I find puzzling is why our Board members aren't as friendly and talkative while serving on the Board.

In any case, we discussed a number of topics that I feel are worth describing here. I found out that this individual was on the original committee that planned NHCC, and he told me how the founders talked about a Chancellor's office way back in the early 1970's. But early plans called for it to be at the South Campus, and the former Board member, it turns out, feels that it makes no sense at all to move the administration away from any campus to a separate location.

We also discussed the Kingwood campus at length, and it turns out that this former NHCC leader thinks the decision to build in Kingwood was a mistake. The reason had nothing to do with the fact that the East Campus is located in a flood plain. This fact was mildly brushed aside as unimportant because "any serious flooding will cover only the parking lots" and people will have adequate warning. No, the Kingwood campus was a mistake, I was told, because its location is too close to the South campus and enrollment will never be sufficient in Kingwood while leveling off, even declining, at the South campus.

The most interesting discussion, however, had to do with the Tomball campus. This ex-Trustee and I both agreed that the western part of the county is the area to locate a second campus due to population density, growth, and isolation from any present college campus. But I was told that a Tomball campus without Klein in the District makes "no sense at all." In the view of this one-time "insider," we should not build a campus for out-of-District students, and Tomball by itself cannot sustain its own campus.

Near the end of our discussion we talked about the election and the Board candidates. This former Board member complimented me for the support given by the union to Dave Robinson, who it turns out, I was told, is a responsible Board member. I was then told that Perry Hickey and Blaine Mann were good prospective Board members who would do a competent job. But Don Stewart is totally unacceptable. I asked why. The only response I received was that Stewart's views on education are too extreme. I still can't figure out what he was talking about, but perhaps it's simply that even an ex-Board member hated to see challenger Don Stewart get the best of Board President Brad York at the Spring debate of January 17th. Now that Stewart is a Board member, that kind of performance may happen again.