



# EMPLOYEE FEDERATION

of

North Harris Montgomery  
Community College District

2700 W. W. Thorne • Suite A-217 • Houston, Texas 77073



## THE ADVOCATE JANUARY, 1995

### LEADING QUESTIONS

Change can bring with it uncertainty, confusion, sometimes dissatisfaction. The college district has undergone a number of changes lately, and, while we celebrate the positive aspects of these changes, we must also be attentive to and deal with the downside of change. Toward that end, The Advocate publishes the following questions that have been submitted to us over the last few months. They come primarily from staff, but faculty have also raised some of these issues.

1. How many new administrators have been added in the last three years? How many additional support staff positions have been hired for them? Which positions are new? Which positions have eliminated?
2. How much have these increases cost the college in salaries, expenses (offices, equipment), transportation (college cars), and memberships?
3. Since enrollment has been a bit shaky, what have these increased costs accomplished? Isn't our primary goal to serve students?
4. Does everyone, including the chancellor, have to report itemized expenses for college related business? Are these expenses public knowledge? If not, why?
5. Have the administrators who have returned to teaching or other duties kept their administrative salaries?
6. The college spent down some of the reserve, added Conroe to the tax roll, raised district taxes, added a technical fee, and last semester raised both in-district and out-of-district tuition after the schedules had already been published. Is it wise to have a bond election on the heels of so many increases in revenue?

The fact that these questions have been asked indicates a degree of discomfort among at least some college employees, and their concerns should be taken seriously. The Federation invites appropriate administrators to forward responses to these questions in writing to Steve Davis at Kingwood College. We will publish the responses in the next issue of The Advocate.

Alan Hall

*"Education for Democracy — Democracy for Education"*

# LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR THE FEDERATION

The Federation is pleased to have negotiated an agreement with Christopher Tritico, of Essmyer and Tritico, to become the union's local attorney. We will continue to have attorneys available through our Austin office. However, the Federation has grown to the point that we also need to have available a local attorney well versed in educational law to assist us in dealing with issues affecting the union as a whole as well as those affecting individual members. Mr. Tritico has extensive experience in this area. He previously worked for five years in the office of Richard "Racehorse" Haynes and currently serves as local counsel for the Houston and North Forest Federations of Teachers.

Mr. Tritico will make presentations throughout the college district as well as write an occasional article in The Advocate on various legal issues and questions. If you have a topic that you would like to see addressed, please forward it to Alan Hall, Federation President, North Harris College, or telephone him at 443-5544.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Steve, I have never written anything for or in response to The Advocate but I just have to vent my frustration at the ATTACK on Olin Joynton. I have known Olin for over 12 years. Olin has earned not only my respect but the respect of his colleagues and his students by commitment above and beyond the call of duty over the many years of dedicated service to North Harris College and the district. I believe in professional courtesy and if I had questions about Olin's comments, I would have asked him to expand and clarify his comments before "slam-basting" him against the wall with unearned and undeserved insults, especially if I did not know him at all.

Concerning committee work and that "it is often a waste of resources", perhaps there are those who are unaware of the numerous "benefits" we all enjoy (faculty, and staff) due to the untold energy spent and commitment made by faculty and staff alike who serve on committees. Our system is not perfect but I have worked in other educational systems in other states and ours is right up there in the best top ten as far as I'm concerned. To ask for recognition for "duties outside of direct contact with students" is hardly unreasonable. The NHMCCD Awards Banquet is a perfect example to show that the desire for recognition not only "looks good" and "feels good" but also has monetary benefit as well. Besides, what's wrong with wanting recognition?

I have never been privileged to take one of Olin's classes, but having worked registration for over 13 years at North Harris and Kingwood colleges, I have had the opportunity to talk with students who have taken his classes. Not once have I heard a negative comment about his personality, his teaching skills or that "the value of the time that is spent in class" is anything but positive and of great benefit to the students academically and personally.

I could not let this article pass by me without comment. I have great respect for Olin Joynton as a colleague and a friend and those who KNOW him surely agree.

**Marilyn Tanner**

This is in response to Nick Lewis's letter in the last *Advocate*. First, Nick Lewis is not currently an Adjunct English Professor at KC, and I want to make sure it is understood he speaks only for himself. Second, I have known Olin Joynton for over 10 years: those of us who have been around for a while know he is one of the finest teachers and most decent people in the District. It is obvious to those of us who know and work with Olin that Nick Lewis does not know him. Third, I was on that District Faculty Compensation Committee for three years: not only is it untrue that we "never accomplished anything," but in fact those recommendations have been taken under advisement, and many have been included in the recent compensation proposals sent through e-mail from Dr. Pickelman's office. Fourth, many current full-time professors know very well of the "migrant" status of the adjunct: they come from those ranks and do not need to be informed of the problems--they lived them. And far from not valuing teaching or their adjunct colleagues, most are talented classroom instructors who care deeply about their students and are generous in their empathy for, appreciation of, and assistance to their colleagues. I have my eye on several adjuncts I would love to recommend for full-time when the positions open. They know it, too. I do not know ANY full-time faculty who value committee work over classroom teaching or who need instruction from Mr. Lewis on where their loyalties should lie. In fact, it is Mr. Lewis's letter that is "insulting and demeaning" to full-time faculty in this District who do all that he does in the classroom PLUS serve on committees, participate in community outreach, sponsor student organizations, inaugurate new colleges as we grow, develop new programs and courses, attend state and national conferences etc., etc., etc. It is the finest full-time faculty any college district could be proud to claim; and they have earned their positions through years of public school teaching, adjunct work, low pay and benefits, and all the other concerns Mr. Lewis mentions. It just might be that they have those positions not because they somehow got lucky, but because they are in fact the best their search committees saw in action.

**Joan Samuelson**  
**Professor of English**  
**English Coordinator--KC**

**Editor's Note:** Nick assures us that he meant Olin no personal offense.

## **JOIN THE AFT!**

The Employee Federation welcomes the new employees of NHMCCD. For nearly fifteen years, this local of the American Federation of Teachers has led the fight to make this a better place to work and teach. No other organization or publication at NHMCCD takes our kind of independent, critical approach to District affairs. If you agree with our perspective, show your solidarity by becoming a member. All faculty and staff are eligible. Monthly dues rates are \$20.75 for full-time faculty, \$13.60 for full-time staff and adjunct faculty, and \$10.50 for part-time staff. Discuss membership with Alan Hall, District President (443-5544, 353-8634) or any other member (Tony Foster, Bob Locander, Mel McFadden, Greg Mitchell, Patricia Plunk, Velma Smith, Allen Vogt, Steve Davis) of the Federation Executive Committee. Also, please consider writing for this publication. Send submissions to the Editor, Steve Davis, at Kingwood College.