

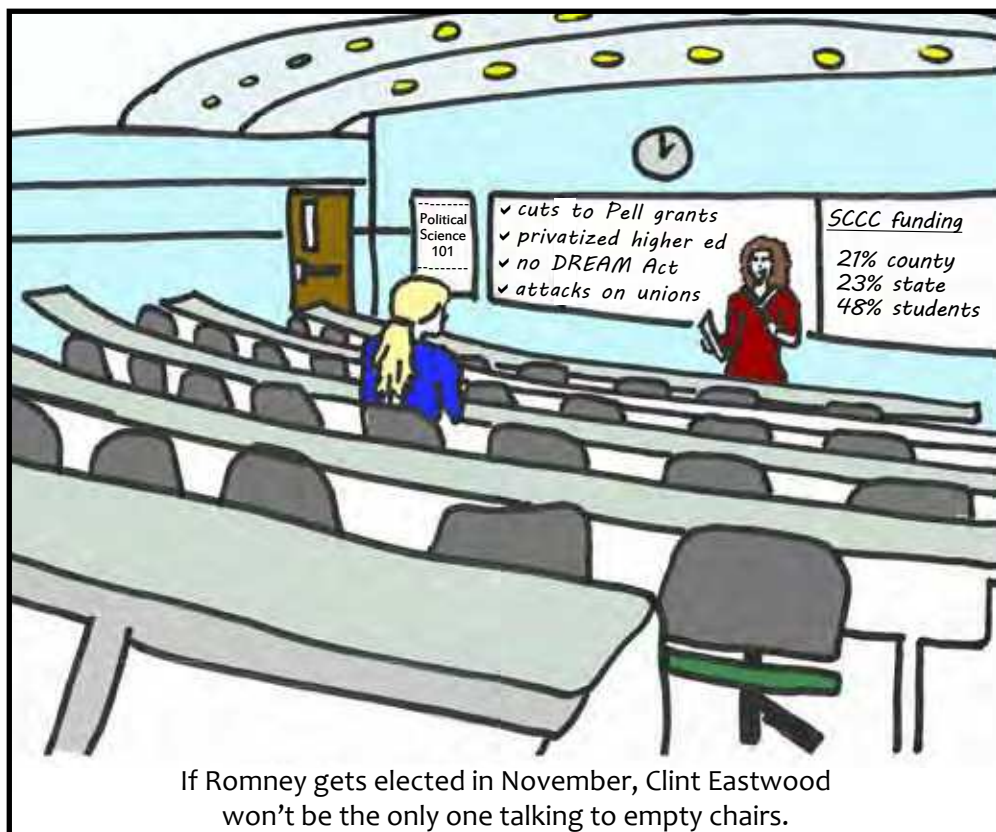
Elections matter—and here's why

by Ellen Schuler Mauk

I write this article with four assumptions in mind:

1. As an FA member who understands the value of political awareness and political action, you are not one of the 4% of eligible voters who is still undecided about your vote in the presidential race;
2. As an FA member whose “enlightened self-interest” understands the immediate value of voting for local legislators who vote on the college budget and the FA contract, you may not always see the same direct value of voting in state and/or federal legislative races;
3. As an FA member, you want to know why our state union (NYSUT) and our national unions (AFT and NEA) have endorsed the candidates they have and why we should vote accordingly on November 6.
4. As a politically well informed FA member, you are by now tired of the political rhetoric and just want the facts about the candidates.

So, that's what this issue of *The WORD* intends to do—just give you



original cartoon by Chris Conzen and Cynthia Eaton

the facts about why the collective we (FA, NYSUT, AFT, NEA) are supporting certain candidates in the upcoming election.

What matters nationally

Since the inside pages of this issue will present the comparison between the two presidential candidates and why we are endorsing President Barack

Obama for a second term, there is no need to go into the explanation here other than to say that your vote matters.

Regardless of the fact that New York is considered a blue state and is already being counted in the Obama electoral tally, the popular vote also counts in terms of impressing upon the public and the newly elected legislatures the

continued on page 6

The graceful exit: Beyond the finances

by Susan Rubenstein DeMasi

“There’s a trick to the Graceful Exit. It begins with the vision to recognize when a job, a life stage, a relationship is over—and to let go. It means leaving what’s over without denying its validity or its past importance in our lives. It involves a sense of future, a belief that every exit line is an entry, that we are moving on rather than out... that we don’t leave the best parts of ourselves behind, back in the dugout or the office. We own what we learned back there. The experiences and the growth are grafted onto our lives. And when we exit, we can take ourselves along—quite gracefully.”

For anyone about to enter the unknown territory known as retirement, the above quote, from Ellen Goodman’s newspaper column upon her own retirement, may capture the emotional frame of mind of prospective retirees.

Staying on track for retirement means more than just focusing on finances. Contemplating the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual can help retirees make that “graceful exit” while also giving them the tools to construct a graceful beginning.

A recent retiree said, “There’s no

way to really prepare. It’s like jumping off a precipice.” It can be both bittersweet and thrilling. Transitioning from a demanding, active schedule to one that is significantly slower can be overwhelming. According to experts, this transition can be made easier with planning.

Some retired SCCC faculty, in a survey conducted by the FA, emphasized that it helps to realize that “your job doesn’t define you.” Many recommend volunteering, traveling if physically able, and enjoying new and old hobbies. Most agree that it’s important to “have a plan.”

Author Nancy K. Schlossberg suggests creating a psychological portfolio. In thinking about retirement, she says, “your identity is challenged. You begin to ask yourself, Who am I, how do I define myself now that I have, for example, left the work force and returned to school or retired? ... How is this transition going to change my relationships? Who will substitute for the relationships I had? ... How is this change going to influence my purpose?”

Below are some resources to help you move toward that “graceful exit.”



How to Prevent or Resolve Marriage Conflicts Caused by Retirement. Fairview Imprints. 2011 (excerpt at www.theretiringmind.com)

- Grace, Richard E. *When Every Day is Saturday: Planning for a Happy Retirement.* Purdue University Press. 2010.
- Schlossberg, Nancy. *Revitalizing Retirement: Reshaping Your Identity, Relationships, and Purpose.* American Psychological Association. 2009.
- Zelinski, Ernie J. *How to Retire Happy, Wild and Free: Retirement Wisdom That You Won't Get from Your Financial Advisor.* Visions International Publishing. 2009.

Websites

- AARP. The personal growth section (www.aarp.org/personal-growth) regularly covers issues such as lifelong learning, transitions, and spiritual growth.
- *Transitions Through Life: How to Survive According to Nancy K. Schlossberg.* Although the website (www.transitionsthroughlife.com) is partially a vehicle to sell her books, the site does offer tips and information based on Schlossberg’s years as a counselor and professor.

Books

- Bolles, Richard N., and John E. Nelson *What Color Is Your Parachute? For Retirement—Planning a Prosperous, Healthy, and Happy Future.* Ten Speed Press. 2010
- Delamontagne, Robert P. *The Retiring Mind and Honey I’m Home:*

The WORD

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Susan Rubenstein DeMasi.....Writer



FYI: Highlights from the Executive Council and other news of note

- **Check your accruals:** The FA reminds its members periodically to check the number of their accrued vacation and sick days in Banner.

- **Health Cost Estimator:** The Health Advocates benefit brought to you by the FA Benefit Fund is a free tool that you can use to get a general estimate of the likely median cost for various medical procedures.

If you (or a covered family member) have questions about the cost of an upcoming medical service or procedure, simply call Health Advocate at 866-695-8622 to speak with a personal health advocate (PHA). Utilizing cutting-edge cost comparison technology, your PHA

can answer your questions and provide you with a personalized report identifying your out-of-pocket costs.

- **All-employees memo about EMHP:** If you haven't already, soon you should receive an all-employees memo regarding a summary of benefits and coverage (SBC). This is just a *summary* of our benefits, as required by the federal government during open enrollment periods; it is not indicative of any changes to our EMHP coverage. The terms of the comprehensive benefits booklet (as amended from time to time) on the EMHP website prevail over the SBC.

- **Adjuncts and NORA forms:** In addition to completing the NORA form by October 31, adjuncts who regularly seek teaching and PA assignments should communicate their preference for one or the other directly to their chair or area supervisor in writing. Tell your supervisor, for example, that you want a PA assignment if you don't get a teaching assignment.

Adjuncts should always communicate these issues to their chairs or supervisors, such as if your availabilities change after the NORA form is submitted. Your supervisor might be able to accommodate your changes, although the college is under no legal obligation to do so.



Liz Foley, Grant campus new member coordinator, speaks to new faculty and their mentors at the annual bagel brunch on October 3. Ammerman campus coordinator Lisa Aymong and Eastern campus coordinator Kathie Rogers are hosting brunches on their campuses on October 18 and 24, respectively.

photo by Kevin Peterman

Why I support Congressman Tim Bishop

by Kevin Peterman

So what is so important about the congressional races this year? How about the basic mission of our profession—our students! When our students are experiencing cuts in funding and in grants, what else can they imagine but “access denied.”

Access denied to loans.

Access denied to a college education.

Access denied to the American dream, to the idea that everyone has a chance (and many times a second chance) to get an education and succeed.

Why do our students conclude that access may be denied?

When we have hardliners seeking office and demanding cuts in Pell grants, they are directly attacking our students. It is also a direct attack on our profession and a direct attack on the American dream.

According to Congressman Bishop, SCCC had 8,831 students receiving Pell grants last academic year for a total of \$28.9 million. Just up Nicolls Road at Stony Brook, 6,177 students received Pell grants totaling more than \$426 million.

You’ve already heard it: this November there is a clear choice.

Do we invest in education, jobs, and opportunities here at home to provide an educated citizenry and good paying jobs?

Or do we resort to the failed trickle down economic theories of the past? How? By giving tax breaks to the very wealthy and slashing taxes which starve the states and counties, forcing them to the brink of collapse.

I don’t mean to be dramatic, but this is what the two different visions of America look like to me. The haves having more and the have not’s having nothing.

In the 1st Congressional District, which is basically the eastern end of Suffolk, there is a tightly contested race that has really grabbed my attention. It is a repeat of the election two years ago when incumbent Tim Bishop narrowly defeated challenger and businessman Randy Altschuler by 593 votes.

Although the candidates are the same as the election two years ago, this time there is a difference. Super PACs have dumped hundreds of thousands of dollars in the 1st CD election. The pundits are saying this race is “the one to watch.”

What really got me started was a statement Altschuler made in May. He was quoted in several East End weeklies saying that “Congressman Bishop is a career bureaucrat and needs to go.” I was so outraged I wrote a letter to the editors of those weeklies, and some published it.

There are several important races both statewide and nationally. We have to focus locally to make an impact in Albany and Washington. The FA is participating in phone banks and labor walks for candidates seeking office in Albany as well as in DC. We do not look at political party affiliation—especially on the state and local level. You can see by the list of endorsed candidates on page 8 that we support candidates from both parties.

Unfortunately, on the national level,

the polarization is so extreme that there is a clear distinction. The congressional race in the 1st CD is all about the “vision of America.”

We are working particularly hard to reelect Congressman Bishop. He is our education voice in Washington. He is the go-to guy with the higher education experience his fellow colleagues seek for advice and guidance. Tim Bishop knows our students’ needs. He knows how education cuts devastate opportunities. That’s not what we are about. We are about transforming lives, about getting our students to think and reason and make a difference.

We need to make a difference.

This election is too important to stay home. Too important to let big money crush the middle class, bash public employees, and eliminate unions.

This election is about the future. This election is about going to the polls on November 6 and *voting*—for candidates who support education, public employees, and union values.



**New Jersey Governor
Chris Christie**

**“[Democrats] believe
in teacher’s unions.
[Republicans] believe
in teachers.”**

**Republican National Convention
August 25, 2012**

**President of the United States
Barack Obama**

**“I do not view the labor
movement as part of
the problem. To me,
it’s part of the solution.”**

**Middle Class Task Force Creation
January 30, 2009**

The prized Professors on Wheels diploma

by Cynthia Eaton

Dan warned us. He told us that being Professors on Wheels is often an emotional experience. To drive home the point, he shared the story of a senior resident from one of his own lectures. The woman was near the end of her life, and she knew it. She wanted just three things in her casket, she said: a photo of her family, a personal memento, and her Professors on Wheels diploma.

The September 21 Professors on Wheels workshop drew an audience of over two dozen FA members who wanted to learn more about this powerful program. They heard from past Wheels presenters, who also spoke to how meaningful the program is.

“One resident told me no fewer than seven times,” smiled Audrey DeLong (English), “that mine was her last class

before graduation.”

“One woman came right up and hugged me,” declared Al Heraghty (Physical Education), “and an older gentleman was so determined to show that he’s still ‘got it’ he dropped right on the floor and started doing push ups.”

The seniors’ energy was evident in Courtney Brewer’s (Psychology) workshops too. “They are just so eager to share their funny stories and examples,” she added.

DeLong, Heraghty, and Brewer shared advice for prospective presenters. DeLong indicated that offering brief segments of information then pausing for questions worked best for her lecture on the Crusades. Brewer noted that presenter topics don’t have to be directly related to the elderly because

“they’re interested in *everything*.” Heraghty suggested that presenters keep it simple and added, “This isn’t something you do for promotion; you should do this for yourself.”

Linker has enjoyed the positive feedback from presenters and participants alike. It’s real interaction with real people for whom you’re making a real difference, he told the audience.

Plus, it helps break the “ensconced in Ivy” image the public has of college professors. “They don’t see us unless they’re in our classes or we’re on the picket line,” he noted. “We are not lazy elitists who live only for summers off. We work hard—and we’re good people who really do care about, and give back to, our communities.”



Participants at the September 21 Professors on Wheels workshop sign up to volunteer. Program coordinator Dan Linker (center back) shared the program’s mission and guidelines with over two dozen participants, with help from Wheels presenters Courtney Brewer, Audrey DeLong, and Al Heraghty.

photo by Gayle Sheridan

FASCC • The WORD

Elections matter

continued from page 1

measure of public support the elected president has in moving his legislative agenda—and public education, public higher education, and the right to form unions and bargain collectively are definitely in his agenda.

While no election can be taken for granted, Kirsten Gillibrand, Steve Israel, and Carolyn McCarthy are not in races that are considered as close or as targeted as Tim Bishop's race. From a higher ed standpoint, the Bishop race is particularly important to us. Aside from any particular legislation he may or may not have backed, Tim Bishop has been particularly helpful in the House education committee when it comes to higher education issues.

He is one of very few members of Congress whose 25-plus years in various administrative positions, including provost of Southampton College, have enabled him to be the go-to person in explaining the nuances of The Higher Education Reauthorization Act to his congressional colleagues.

Bishop also speaks with conviction regarding the importance of Pell grant aid and Stafford loans to the students we serve and he credibly challenged the Spelling Commission's approach to dismantle the accreditation agencies and processes that distinguish legitimate higher ed institutions from fly-by-night, for-profit storefront operations.

As higher ed professionals, we need someone in Congress who gets us, who understands the value of tenure, of academic freedom, of the free exchange of ideas on a college campus, of faculty governance, and of collegial decision-making.

What matters in the state

In the past NYSUT generally endorsed mostly incumbent legislators

because, in the past, most incumbent legislators supported an education and workers' rights agenda.

This last legislative session, however, the tone in Albany had changed considerably—so you'll notice the list on page 8 of NYSUT endorsed candidates for the state Senate and Assembly on Long Island is considerably smaller than in past years. This list reflects the new political reality check of not only looking at what legislators did and did not do but also which ones we can actually get our members out to support.

As you might imagine, there is considerable anger and frustration among our K-12 colleagues over the misguided education agenda in NYS that seems to hold teachers almost solely responsible for the problems in our schools. In this endorsement cycle, NYSUT looked at three criteria:

- Legislators who voted for legislation that promoted public education and workers' rights
- Legislators who also took bold stands in advocating for our positions in their political caucuses
- Legislators who made even bolder stands in voting against legislation that harms our members and cripples our ability to provide quality education at all levels.

The proverbial line in the sand in almost all of the endorsement decisions was that NYSUT did not support any state legislator who voted for the 2% cap law and Tier 6, regardless of that legislator's position of power.

The only exception to this position on Long Island was NYSUT's endorsement of state Sen. Ken LaValle. Despite his vote on the other two issues, Sen. LaValle's advocacy of higher education was critical to the restoration of community college funding and to

protecting the funding for SUNY and CUNY. His leadership on higher ed issues over the years has been essential in making sure that higher ed funding issues are not overlooked when the smoke clears after budget battles in Albany. His advocacy has clearly made a difference to us, and NYSUT acknowledged it with its endorsement.

Of particular note is the endorsement in two races where there is no incumbent. In those races NYSUT supports Rick Montano for state senator in the 4th Senatorial District and Joe Dujmic for state assemblyman in the 10th Assembly District.

Both candidates received enthusiastic support from local union leaders in their districts and the LI Federation, which is committed to work in their campaigns to get out the vote. In particular Rick Montano, who is currently a Suffolk County legislator, has been very supportive of SCCC and the FA with our contract and both the operating and capital budgets of the college. We know he'll continue to advocate for us in Albany.

What matters to us

Obviously, the endorsements in this edition of *The WORD* are not based on all issues that our members consider when voting for a candidate. And just as obviously, we realize that not every FA member is going to agree with all the endorsements made by our state and national affiliates.

But from where we all sit as higher ed professionals and academic unionists, the information in this issue is at least a starting point to consider where we individually and collectively stand.

What matters most is that we get out and vote on November 6.

Proactive academic advising

by Al Heraghty (Physical Education)

Editor's note: The Title III Faculty Mentoring and Student Engagement (FM&SE) group is encouraging faculty to become more involved with academic advisement. In this article, Al Heraghty (associate professor of physical education) shares techniques that have proven valuable in his own advisement efforts.

There are so many benefits to advising students here at SCCC, from retention and full classrooms to positive student attitudes about the guidance they receive. When you reach out to students and help them—whether it's with understanding their SAIN report, building a schedule, or staying on track with degree requirements—they will never forget that you were there.

In my 13 years at the college, I have developed some activities that are not only effective but have received encouraging feedback from students. Below are some proactive advising strategies that I use in and out of the classroom.

Engaging students

- 1. Include advisement in your course outline:** Add information about advising and hours of availability.
- 2. Talk about it on the first day of class:** I find that many students do not know that faculty also can serve as advisors. Students are more comfortable seeing someone they know for advisement.
- 3. Schedule meeting times:** I have students sign in whenever they meet with me for advisement. I try to see most of them before priority registration, so they're all set with their desired CRN numbers on the day they register.

- 4. Talk with students outside of class:** Whenever I see my students on campus, I ask them how their classes are going and if they know what they are taking the next semester. I encourage them not to wait until priority registration before they build their schedule.

Meeting with advisees

- 1. Design an advising syllabus:** This gives students my contact information, hours of availability, and college resources. It also provides a list of their responsibilities and a master academic plan (MAP) for their particular concentration.
- 2. Review the SAIN report:** Print the student's SAIN and show them how to read it, especially when it comes to how many credits they need for their degree.
- 3. Build a file:** For each advisee, I create a file with all their information,

their SAIN, their schedules, etc. This models for them how to stay organized and how to keep track of their own academic progress.

- 4. Make a list of things to do:** On their file I usually give them some tasks, for example, know when to register in Banner, go to the financial aid office, or visit the writing or tutoring center.
- 5. Master academic plan:** My students love this! They like to know what they need to take in order to graduate. This is already done in the college catalog, but students appreciate having their own copy. We review it, and the students are able to update it in their advisement folder.

Feel free to try these techniques with your own students. I welcome questions and feedback on how successful they were for you.



Al Heraghty (Physical Education, Grant) meets with an advisee in his office. Heraghty serves on the Title III working group Faculty Mentoring and Student Engagement (FM&SE).

photo by Kevin Peterman

2012 political endorsements

by Kevin Peterman

As noted in the September *WORD*, I spent time this summer at both the NYSUT and the New York State AFL-CIO endorsement conferences. There's no question that both organizations engaged in healthy discussion and debate, and then relied on their locals for input and recommendations before they made endorsement decisions.

Below are the results of those and other endorsement processes. The FA encourages you to consider these endorsements when you vote on November 6.

Key

D - Democrat
R - Republican
I - Independence

L - Liberal
C - Conservative

W - Working Families
G - Green

National Elections

<i>position</i>	<i>district</i>	<i>party</i>	<i>candidate</i>	<i>AFT</i>	<i>NYSUT</i>	<i>NYS AFL-CIO</i>	<i>LI Federation</i>
President		D	Barack Obama	☑	☑	☑	☑
Congress							
Senate		D	Kirsten E. Gillibrand	☑	☑	☑	☑
House	1	D	Timothy Bishop	☑	☑	☑	☑
	2	D	Steve Israel	☑	☑	☑	☑
	4	D	Carolyn McCarthy	☑	☑	☑	☑

State Elections

<i>position</i>	<i>district</i>	<i>party</i>	<i>candidate</i>	<i>NYSUT</i>	<i>NYS AFL-CIO</i>	<i>LI Federation</i>
Senate	1	R, C, I	Kenneth P. LaValle	☑	☑	☑
	4	D	Ricardo Montano	☑		☑
	6	R, C, I	Kemp Hannon		☑	
	8	R, C, I	Charles Fuschillo, Jr.		☑	☑
	9	R	Dean G. Skelos		☑	
Assembly	1	R, I, WF	Fred Thiele			☑
	3	R	Dean Murray	☑		
	4	D, I, WF	Steven Englebright		☑	☑
	5	R, I	Alfred Graf	☑	☑	☑
	6	D, I, WF	Philip Ramos	☑	☑	☑
	7	D	Christopher Bodkin	☑		
	9	R, C, I	Joseph Saladino	☑	☑	☑
	10	D, WF	Joseph Dujmic	☑	☑	☑
	11	D, I, WF	Robert Sweeney			☑
	12	R, C	Andrew Raia	☑	☑	☑
	13	D	Charles D. Lavine	☑	☑	☑
	14	R	David McDonough	☑	☑	☑
	16	D, I, WF	Michelle Schimel	☑	☑	☑
	20	D, I, WF	Harvey Weisenberg	☑		☑

Elections matter for higher education; Or, what has Obama done for us lately?

Throughout his presidency, Barack Obama has been a stalwart believer in higher education's promise of creating opportunity for all Americans.

- President Obama increased funding for community colleges, recognizing that community colleges play a key role in helping Americans acquire the education, skills, and credentials they need to succeed.
- President Obama worked to raise the maximum Pell grant available to students. The amount of funding available for Pell grants has more than doubled since he took office, as the number of Pell grant recipients has increased by 50 percent.
- Under President Obama, the expanded \$2,500 American Opportunity Tax Credit for tuition expenses last year helped more than 9 million students attend college.
- By reforming the student loan process, President Obama made college more affordable for middle-class students, and now faculty at public colleges and universities, nurses, and members of the armed forces can have their student loans forgiven after 10 years.
- President Obama signed an executive order protecting veterans' and military families' Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits from fraud and abuse by for-profit colleges, including unduly aggressive recruiting techniques on and off military installations, misrepresentation of program benefits, and payment of recruiters based on the number of students they enroll.



photo courtesy of Karen GJ Lewis

Chicago Teachers Union president Karen GJ Lewis sent the above photo with a letter expressing appreciation of the FA's support during the recent CTU strike. Lewis writes, "There were many variables to consider when we were forced by our employer to take a job action on September 10: our members and their families weighed heavily on our minds, the students who would not be in our classrooms, public opinion, and even the threat of political fallout, to name a few. But we never wavered or grew weary because of the unity, solidarity, and well wishes we received from you and our brothers and sisters in the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College. We are forever grateful for your words of encouragement and acts of kindness."

The candidates on the issues

adapted from the NEA 2012 Issues Guide

With the 2012 election right around the corner, documents such as the NEA 2012 Issues Guide can be useful in helping voters compare the candidates on the most pressing issues. Since we are members of a higher education bargaining unit, some key issues for our membership are highlighted below. For NEA's presentation of other important issues, visit [www.EdVotes.org/Election 2012](http://www.EdVotes.org/Election2012).

	President of the United States Barack Obama	Former Gov. of Massachusetts Mitt Romney
Education Funding	<p>The Obama administration has made education funding its highest domestic priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FY2013 budget provides the largest percentage increase to education. • The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act saved 400,000 educator jobs and the Education Jobs Fund saved an additional 150,000 jobs. • The administration strongly supports the American Jobs Act, which contains \$30 billion in funding for states to hire and rehire educators. <p><i>source: WhiteHouse.gov</i></p>	<p>As governor of Massachusetts, Romney slashed \$2.3 million from school readiness grants, early literacy programs, and school meals for low-income students.</p> <p>As a candidate for president, Romney has pledged his support for Rep. Paul Ryan's budget, which would cut funding for education and other priorities, such as cutting Title I by \$2.7 billion and slashing Head Start access for 100,000 kids.</p> <p><i>sources: Gloucester Daily Times, 11/30/06; MA Budget and Policy Center, 3/5/03; The Note, ABC, 3/20/12; Education Week Blog, 3/22/12</i></p>
Higher Education	<p>President Obama has consistently promoted affordable access to higher education for all students. He has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed into law \$36 billion over 10 years to increase the maximum Pell grant award and \$2 billion for community colleges. • Led the charge to stop the student loan interest rate hike. • Signed an executive order protecting men and women who have served or are currently in the military from unscrupulous "diploma mills." <p><i>source: WhiteHouse.gov</i></p>	<p>Romney has continually supported policies to cut funding to higher education and would support increasing the number of for-profit higher education institutions.</p> <p>As governor of Massachusetts, he proposed raising tuition by 15% and reduced higher education funding. As a result, student fees were increased by 63% to offset budget cuts. Romney's higher education plan calls for cuts in federal funding because he says it "helped fuel the problem," and will roll back student-protection regulations in the for-profit and student loan industries that curb fraud and abuse.</p> <p><i>sources: Boston Globe, 3/3/03; Boston Globe, 6/29/07; Ames Tribune, 12/29/11; Mitt Romney Education Plan, 5/23/12</i></p>

The candidates on the issues

adapted from the NEA 2012 Issues Guide

President of the United States Barack Obama

Former Gov. of Massachusetts Mitt Romney

Workers' Rights	<p>President Obama fully supports workers' rights to form unions and opposes so-called "right-to-work" legislation.</p> <p>President Obama believes "collective bargaining is a 'fundamental American value.'" The President cited labor as "the reason we have a minimum wage, weekends away from work to rest and spend time with family, and basic protections in our workplaces." He said "making it harder for public employees to collectively bargain is an assault on unions."</p> <p><i>sources:</i> Presidential Proclamation, Office of the Secretary, The White House, 9/2/11; WTMJ-TV, 2/17/11; <i>Political Punch</i>, ABC, 2/17/11; <i>The Washington Independent</i>, 9/6/11; WSAZ.com, 4/26/11</p>	<p>Romney has stated he would sign a national "right-to-work" law if president.</p> <p>Romney supported the failed New Hampshire "right-to-work" law and waffled on restricting teachers' collective bargaining rights in Ohio, ultimately supporting restrictions.</p> <p>Romney also supported the attack on teachers' rights in Wisconsin.</p> <p><i>sources:</i> <i>The Street</i>, 9/28/11; <i>Bloomberg</i>, 11/23/11; <i>Los Angeles Times</i>, 11/30/11; <i>Politico</i>, 10/25/11; <i>Boston Globe</i>, 2/24/11</p>
Social Security and Retirement Benefits	<p>President Obama is committed to protecting and strengthening Social Security. He will work to find a bipartisan solution that strengthens Social Security for future generations, without putting current retirees or people with disabilities at risk. The president opposes slashing benefits for future generations or subjecting Americans' retirement income to the whims of the stock market.</p> <p><i>sources:</i> WhiteHouse.gov; Weekly Radio Address, 8/14/10</p>	<p>Romney would change Social Security as we know it by privatizing it, raising the retirement age, and reducing payments.</p> <p><i>sources:</i> Florida Republican Debate, 10/27/07; Romney, Mitt. <i>No Apology</i>, 2011, p.173</p>
Fair Pay for Women	<p>The president strongly supported and signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law.</p> <p>He also supports the Paycheck Fairness Act and acknowledges that "gains in education and labor force involvement have not yet translated into wage and income equity."</p> <p><i>sources:</i> WhiteHouse.gov; <i>The Washington Post</i>, 1/29/09</p>	<p>As governor of Massachusetts, Romney implemented policies that hurt women. He thinks low-income mothers should be required to work outside the home or lose their benefits, "even if you have a child two years of age."</p> <p><i>sources:</i> MSNBC, 4/12/12; <i>Boston Globe</i>, 12/8/04; <i>The Huffington Post</i>, 4/15/12</p>

Do vice presidents matter? This election says yes!

Elections Matter



Paul Ryan has been the U.S. representative from Wisconsin's first congressional district since 1999. He is also the architect of the "**Ryan budget plan**," which would force dramatic cuts to discretionary spending, drastically reducing federal support for education, healthcare, Medicare, Medicaid and a range of vital public services. Mitt Romney has said "I am very supportive of the Ryan budget plan" (Alexander Burns, "Romney Endorses Ryan Budget," *Politico*, 3/20/12.), and has pledged, if elected president, to sign it into law. Here are the highlights of the Ryan budget:

EDUCATION

Slash federal spending on public education, including for Title I (which helps less-privileged students) and IDEA (which helps disabled students). Ryan opposed increased funding for Head Start programs, and he also voted repeatedly against the Pell Grants that help lower- and middle-income students attend college. (Valerie Strauss, "Paul Ryan on Education Policy: Vouchers, For-Profit Colleges, Local Control," *Washington Post*, 8/11/12.)

HEALTHCARE

Repeal the Affordable Care Act, resulting in higher medical/insurance costs for middle-class families, eliminating coverage for as many as 33 million people, and allowing insurance companies to once again deny coverage due to pre-existing conditions or drop customers who get sick. (Sam Baker, "Liberal Think Tank Says Ryan's Medicare Argument Is Dishonest," *The Hill*, 8/13/12.)

MEDICARE

Eliminate the Medicare guaranteed benefit that all workers can count on as they age, and replace it with a voucher scheme—doubling out-of-pocket expenses. (Josh Kraushaar, "Use of Ryan Budget in Hill Races Offers Insight," *National Journal*, 8/11/12.) According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, in Ryan's voucher system Medicare beneficiaries could have to shoulder as much as 68 percent of their medical costs, far more than what they currently spend under Medicare. (Congressional Budget Office, "Long-Term Analysis of a Budget Proposal by Chairman Ryan," 4/5/11.)

MEDICAID

Cut nearly \$1.4 trillion from Medicaid by 2022, dramatically reducing coverage for a range of recipients, including underprivileged children and the elderly in need of full-time care in nursing homes. (Ezra Klein, "Paul Ryan's Biggest Budget Cuts Are to Medicaid, Not Medicare," *Washington Post*, 8/13/12.)

TAXES

Give tax cuts to the wealthy and tax increases to the middle class. The richest 1 percent would get 45 percent of tax cuts, and taxes for working-poor households would actually increase. (Urban Institute and Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, "Table T12-0127: House Republican Budget Plan without Unspecified Base Broadeners," 4/9/12.) Under Ryan's tax plan, the very wealthy who derive all their income from capital gains and dividends—like Mitt Romney—would pay no federal taxes at all. (Alec MacGillis, "Why Ryan Makes Romney's Tax Problem Even Worse," *New Republic*, 8/11/12.)

SPENDING CUTS

Most of the cuts in federal spending would come from the programs that primarily serve lower-income Americans. (Kelsey Merrick and Jim Horney, "Chairman Ryan Gets 62 Percent of His Huge Budget Cuts from Programs for Lower-Income Americans," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 3/23/12.)

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's selection of U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin to be his running mate makes it clearer than ever that the Republican ticket stands for creating more wealth for those who need it least and telling the rest of America, "You're on your own."

Elections Matter. For more information on why we support the re-election of President Obama, visit www.aft.org/election2012.

Teaching old dogs new ways to do old tricks:

Review of the ELT mentor workshop

by Cynthia Eaton

True or false? *It's easier for adults to learn to do a familiar task in an unfamiliar way than it is to learn a completely new task.*

According to the mentor seminar held on October 5, this is false. You can teach an “old dog”—referring to adults versus children—new tricks. It's teaching them new ways to do old tricks that's the problem.

This and other insights into the complex relationships between mentors and mentees were discussed at the workshop, which was cosponsored by the Office of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and the FA.

Facilitator Barbara Luna of the NYSUT Education and Learning Trust (ELT) indicated to the thirty-plus participants that it's harder for adults to have to unlearn something so that they can learn something new.

Citing information from Hal Porter's *Mentoring New Teachers*, Luna explained, “New information that has little relationship to an individual's experience or behavior does not have to be filtered through very much before being added to that person's repertoire.” However, adults have a harder time integrating new information into a task that's already familiar.

What does this mean for the volunteer mentors in the FA mentoring program? Luna asserts that patience and creativity are key. She also emphasizes active listening skills, referring to the acronym SPACE from Costa and Kallick's *Reflective Practice to Improve Schools*:

- **Silence.** This refers to the unexpectedly difficult task of simply listening to the mentee.

- **Paraphrasing.** It's helpful to pick up on critical words or phrases from the mentee. Acknowledge and validate responses and feelings by restating them in your own words.

- **Accepting nonjudgmentally.** This includes verbal and nonverbal (body) language. Avoid using judgmental phrases; allow the mentee to be his or her own judge.

- **Clarifying.** Probe for more detail or clarity. Press for specificity. But be patient when asking questions. Wait for an answer; reflection happens in silence.

- **Extending.** It's helpful to summarize and acknowledge ideas, feelings, and decisions before ending meetings. Invite the mentee to think through various ways to apply his or her ideas.

Participants discussed ways to establish trust and mutual respect, to demonstrate sharing and caring, and to show a willingness to listen and learn as a mentor and mentee move through several stages of their relationship. “A good mentor,” noted Ellen Schuler Mauk, “can help new members not only learn the ropes at an institution of this size but also learn to negotiate personalities as well.”



Facilitator Barbara Luna and FA president Ellen Schuler Mauk greet thirty-plus participants at the mentoring workshop.

College wide new member coordinator Sarah Gutowski explained, “The new member mentoring program takes place over the course of a year, and participants have no obligation beyond that. Ideally, though, if the mentoring process goes well, the collegial relationship between mentor and mentee will exist far beyond the initial year.”

Gutowski was pleased with the workshop: “It touched on how to make our mentoring experiences rewarding and long lasting for both mentor and mentee.”



Facilitator Barbara Luna speaks with associate dean of academic affairs Sandra Sprows (Ammerman), as Nancy Penncavage, Liz Foley, Kevin McCoy, and Chris McDougal listen.

photo by Kevin Peterman

photo by Kevin Peterman



COMPARE THE CANDIDATES on education

Barack Obama

"I believe that this country succeeds when everyone gets a fair shot."

—President Obama,
weekly address, June 9, 2012

Mitt Romney

"He [Obama] says we need more firemen, more policemen, more teachers. Did he not get the message of Wisconsin? The American people did. It's time for us to cut back on government and help the American people."

—Mitt Romney,
campaign event, June 8, 2012

Early Childhood Education

- Expanded funding for early learning programs to serve an additional 61,000 children and families. (Laura Wilson, "Keeping His Word: Early Childhood Education," 2/17/12.)
- As governor of Massachusetts, cut funding for early childhood education and opposed universal pre-K. (Derrick Z. Jackson, *Boston Globe*, 6/9/07; Kate Plourd, *Telegram and Gazette*, 2/2/07.)

Class Size

- Provided funding to keep educators on the job to help prevent class sizes from growing. (U.S. Dept. of Education, "ARRA Report: Summary of Programs and State-by-State Data," 11/2/09.)
- Dismisses the importance of smaller class sizes, claiming the fight to maintain teacher-student ratios is a ploy by teachers trying to add more members to their unions. (Romney, *No Apology*, p. 208.)

Testing

- Says we should "stop teaching to the test" and give teachers the flexibility to teach a fuller range of real-world skills to students. (Obama 2012 State of the Union address, 1/24/12.)
- Believes in standardized tests, and attributes concerns about them to teachers unions trying to reject accountability for the performance of teachers in the classroom. (Romney, "A Chance for Every Child," 5/23/12; *New York Times*, South Carolina Republican Presidential Debate transcript, 5/15/07.)

Vouchers

- Opposes private school vouchers. (Associated Press, "Obama Budget Would End D.C. School Vouchers," 2/14/12.)
- Supports transforming portions of Title I and IDEA into a massive federal voucher program. (Romney, "A Chance for Every Child," 5/23/12.)

Education Jobs

- Signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act protecting critical public services and stabilizing communities. The ARRA saved or created approximately 300,000 education and public service jobs. (Cynthia McCabe and Tim Walker, *NEA Today*, 2/17/10.)
- Wants to cut funding for police officers, firefighters and teachers. (Andrew Rosenthal, *New York Times*, 6/12/12.)

Higher Education Affordability

- Made higher education more affordable and accessible by increasing the number of Pell Grant recipients from 6 million to 9 million. (Matthew Lynch, *Huffington Post*, 4/3/12.)
- Supports a budget plan that would take away Pell Grants from 1 million college students over the next 10 years. (Joy Resmovits, *Huffington Post*, 3/27/12.)

When you compare the candidates on the issues, the choice is clear.

That is why the AFT has endorsed President Barack Obama for re-election.

For more information, visit www.aft.org/election2012.



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631-451-4151



photo by Victoria Sinacori

Representatives from the Suffolk County AHRC pose with Elizabeth Chu (Math) and Susan Orlando (Nursing) during the FA sponsored October 3 plant sale on the Ammerman campus. The plant sale at Ammerman this year raised \$668 for the AHRC.