

THE PORTABLE

NEWS FOR AND BY ACC ADJUNCT INSTRUCTORS

March/April 2003

Adjunct Faculty Association Spring General Assembly!

**Friday, April 11
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Eastview Campus
Student Lounge**

We will meet with Dr.
Fonte
and the ACC Board of
Trustees.

The focus of this meeting
is discuss the May tax
referendum and how it will
affect adjuncts

ACC May 3, 2003 Referenda Proposals

Laura Hague

On May 3, voters in the Austin Community College tax district have the opportunity to vote on ACC's two referenda proposals. Many of ACC's faculty and staff are actively working with the ACC CAN committee to spread the word about ACC's mission and goals. Others are working toward passage of the referendum as members of the private group, Friends of ACC. Even if you are not actively involved in the tax referendum question, there is a good chance that your friends and neighbors will turn to you for information. As instructors for ACC, we need to know why ACC is asking for this increase.

Austin Community College is asking that voters consider a phased-in increase in the ACC tax cap. If this proposal passes, it will add four cents to the ACC tax over three years. The second proposal is for bonds to support the building and renovation of classroom space. The money will go to expand availability of high demand programs and meet student needs. The \$99 million raised would help pay for the new Health Sciences building now nearing completion at Eastview campus, a South Austin campus, expansion at Cedar Park, renovation at Rio Grande, and science labs throughout the College. Financing the bond would cost an extra one cent on the tax rate. If both proposals pass, the cost to the owner of a home worth \$100,000 a year would be an extra fifty dollars.

Austin Community College has not had an increase in the tax rate since 1986, despite serving a growing population with expanded enrollment, new programs, and new classrooms. ACC has the lowest tax community college district tax rate in the state, and the highest tuition. Community colleges are

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Spring General Assembly notice
- 1 Referenda Proposals
- 2 AFA President's Address to the Board, February 2003
- 3 Teaching Tools and Tips
- 3 AFA President's Address to the Board, March 2003
- 3 Adjunct Soapbox

vital institutions, educating the providers of our society's most essential needs and providing the avenue by which thousands become financially self-sufficient. Many of our new healthcare workers, law enforcement personnel, paramedics, and firefighters receive their training through ACC. ACC offers training for other service areas also, many of which, such as child care and culinary arts, are entry points into ownership of private enterprises. ACC benefits to the economy are thus greater than the cost of taxes, saving an estimated \$4.59 for each tax dollar invested in ACC.

ACC's ability to continue contributing at this level is in peril. Student enrollment continues to climb, and more students than ever—nearly 4000 this past Fall—are being turned away for lack of room. Tuition, while high, only provides one third of the College's revenues currently, but may become the backbone of revenue as the State's contribution continues to drop. Thus, ACC's tuition will have to increase even more if other funds are not forthcoming.

The Texas Comptroller's Performance Review laid out a series of cost-saving measures, chief of which was increasing class size, that have largely been implemented already. While ACC is continuing to look for ways to trim its budget, little can be expected in the way of further savings through belt-tightening measures.

Dr. Fonté and members of the ACC Board will be on hand at the Spring Adjunct Faculty General Assembly to talk about the referendum. The Spring General Assembly will be at Eastview, in the student lounge, Building 2000, on April 11, 4-6 pm.

Useful Links:

The Future of ACC:

<http://www.austincc.edu/future/>

ACC CAN committee:

<http://www.austincc.edu/future/can.php>

Friends of ACC:

<http://home.austin.rr.com/mcguffee/election/>

ACCYES!:

<http://www.accyes.org>

AFA PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE BOARD

DON MORRIS, AFA PRESIDENT

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2003

Good Evening, Chairman Quintanilla, President Fonte', Trustees,

Austin Community College is facing an immense financial challenge that tears at the very core of our institutional values. With a threatened reduction in state appropriations the next few years, ACC has two basic decisions; increasing revenues and/or decreasing expenditures. While we might be tempted to throw up our hands and scurry about proclaiming our solace in layoffs, such a decision would be an egregious one. Layoffs and rumors of layoffs will create an intense and volatile climate within the College that will directly affect our relationships and service to students, the community and each other. Layoffs do not embrace our core values and will divide us. We MUST remain in truth and united as a community within a college. Herb Kelleher former CEO of Southwest Airlines put it this way "You remember that systems are not masters – they are servants in helping you carry out your mission. And that nothing

comes ahead of your people."

The AFA believes the student teacher relationship is at the very core of what defines the College. All budget decisions should be determined through careful consideration as to their affect upon that primary relationship. Decisions that negatively impact student performance in the classroom, or the professor's didactical skills should be considered as a last resort. I believe layoffs would do the greatest harm to that relationship. If we stripped away all of the bricks and mortar of this institution, unplugged all of the computers, emptied all of the libraries, you would still have teachers teaching and students learning.

I call upon our leadership to dispel from consideration the termination of ANY employee, whether hourly, classified, professional or technical, faculty or administrator. Lead our College and seize upon the opportunity to build bridges between people. In this chaotic time let us not relent to the anarchic. Instead unleash the ingenuity that has enabled the College to excel. Let us unite in common cause and forge ahead holding true to our mission, goals and values.

Teaching Tools and Tips

Meeting Assignment Deadlines

Michael Martino <mmartino@austincc.edu>

We often have to teach some of our students "how to go to college" as well as teaching them the subject matter. To help students learn how to learn, many of us employ various teaching tools. This one page sheet from Michael Martino is a method that students, among others, can use to learn to meet deadlines.

1. Prepare a written plan
Plans include these items:
 - Goals (be specific)
 - Design (describe how to meet the goals)
 - Inputs (list the necessary actions & items)
 - Verification (means to assure completion)
 - Dates (when will it get done)
2. Carry out the plan
 - Check off each action as it's completed
3. Keep completed planning sheets
 - Periodically compare plans with results

Do you have a Teaching Tool or Tip to pass along? Send your ideas and advice to Laura Hague, editor, The Portable, EVC, or via email to Lhague@austincc.edu.

Adjunct Soap Box

Why I Teach

Laurie Meyers, ACC Adjunct

Communications Department, English

It has been said that the more time passes since a particular event, fewer negative impressions surface; and eventually, only the happy parts of it remain. Maybe that is true; maybe not.

I remember Mrs. Warren well. She was a tall, slender woman with dishwater blonde hair that hung to her knees in a ponytail. She taught second grade.

ADDRESS TO THE BOARD

DON MORRIS, AFA PRESIDENT

TUESDAY, MARCH 04, 2003

Good Evening, Chairman Quintanilla, President Fonte', Trustees,

The AFA would like to thank President Fonté for his recent open letter to faculty and staff. The adjunct faculty reaffirms our commitment and passion to serving students and community with educational excellence and in pursuing our shared mission and vision. We also reaffirm our commitment to help secure financial stability within the College and will endeavor with all diligence to support the ACC referendum in May.

The Adjunct Faculty Association acknowledges and supports the Board's recent initiative to review its own policies. We look forward to contributing to the process especially as it pertains to adjunct faculty instructional effectiveness and commitment to serving students, community and the College.

In closing I would like to invite you to attend our spring General Assembly meeting to be held at the Eastview Campus, Friday, April 11 4-6:00 pm. We will focus our gathering on the ACC May referendum. What it means to adjunct faculty and how we can participate. I encourage you to attend.

The first day of class, she told us that this was our classroom; and in here, we were going to learn wonderful things. I guess we did; I still remember her.

Mrs. Manley made the next impression. She taught fifth grade English and art. She bounced a bit, smiled all the time, and drew beautiful pictures. You see, on Fridays, she would draw a picture on the board. The class would use that picture to write a story. I do not remember any of mine. I am sure my mother kept my stories somewhere. (After all, I have seven Xerox paper boxes in the garage with my son's name on them and each labeled with various numbers from kindergarten to twelfth grade.) I only seem to remember the last line of a story written by JoAnn Gridenwise. The picture Mrs. Manley had drawn that Friday had been of a goat eating laundry from a clothesline in a backyard. JoAnn's story

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

ended with the line, "'Burp,' said the goat, 'Excuse me.'" I also remember the laughter and the even bigger than normal smile on Mrs. Manley's face. There was something about these two women that I will never forget.

High school gave me the answer. I had Mrs. Abernathy for Geometry my sophomore year. Until this class, math was a subject that, as far as I was concerned, had been created to torture people; but this was different. Geometry had pictures; I could see what I was finding. The next year, I had Mrs. Abernathy again. That same year, I also had Mrs. Enlow. She taught American Literature. It was in her class that I realized what these four women had.

I added only three more names to my list, two in college. Dr. Maryellen Whitten taught "The Teaching of High School English" and Mrs. Mary Ellen Wilbanks was my co-operating teacher when I did my student teaching. Neither of these women used a textbook to teach and each seemed to be part of the subjects they taught. I wanted more than anything to do this. I wanted to "make somebody's list" someday.

I never told the women who determined and shaped

my destiny about my list or that they were on it. Some days, I really wish I had. There are the special days where a student says "thanks", "I really learned something." or there is a card in the mail with a note of thanks. It is really great when they say thanks and you find out one is teaching math where you taught her English.

It would be great if the thanks came with job security, a large paycheck, a new home, a new car (I would settle for one less than fifteen years old.), insurance, and parking places at work. I know how important these things can seem, and they are important. The AFA and the AFT are working to make all this happen. It should happen; it should have happened long ago; but for me, when it all comes down to the end, what I want most is to be on someone's list". I shall still remember Mrs. Warren, Mrs. Manley, Mrs. Abernathy, Mrs. Enlow, Mrs. Web, Dr. Whitten, and Mrs. Wilbanks. They were teachers; they just taught.

Do you have a musing, an opinion, a poem, or a bit of art to share? Adjunct Soapbox is just the place! Send submissions to Laura Hague, editor, The Portable, EVC, or via email to Lhague@austincc.edu.

Seeking Submissions for *The Portable*, April-May 2003

The Portable is always accepting contributions. You think you have nothing to share? How wrong you are! Share your teaching ideas and insights, your ideas on how ACC can improve, your advice to new adjuncts. Tell us about your conference experiences. Let us know if you have some news you would like to shout to the world. Ask questions! We have ways of finding answers.

As always, send your contributions to Laura Hague, editor, *The Portable*, EVC, via campus mail or to Lhague@austincc.edu.

The Portable is a newsletter for and by the adjuncts instructors of Austin Community College. Opinions in *The Portable* are not necessarily those of The College itself but reflect the diversity of the adjunct instructors.