

MSCF Minute



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Emerging Leaders College and Power

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The 2018-2019 class of Emerging Leaders College (ELC) is half over. It has been a wonderful experience thus far. The sessions, such as our most recent meeting to discuss the role of the state president, have been very beneficial. Although, having said that, I think some of the most valuable insights have come not just from the lessons, but also from the side conversations we have had over the past few months. The exchanges over lunch, while carpooling to the system office, and during breaks have been, for me, some of the best parts of the ELC.

One of the themes that has resonated with me this year is the power of the people in the union. Not just the state officers and local officers, but the power of each individual member. MSCF's power does not come from its money, essential though it may be. True power comes from its people. The union isn't necessarily going to be strong, even if we have 4,500 members. MSCF will be strong if we are all *engaged* in the union.

We have learned about MSCF's power from its history. For example, when we learned about the history of MSCF and the 1979 strike, we learned that union membership had to be together and management had to know it in order for us to exert our power. Past presidents have given wise advice that the best way to make our union stronger is for each of us to be an effective teacher, so that our students and supervisors see it, and that this excellence is the source of our power.

We have learned that MSCF's power will be needed to take us into the future. With the upcoming Supreme Court hearing and expected decision in Janus vs. AFSCME, the future of MSCF will need to change. This change can be a good thing! Current state officers are nearing the end of their terms, retiring, or moving onto new paths. New leaders are going to be needed to usher in this new era and each and every union member has the opportunity to participate and shape the future of our union.

Once again, MSCF is collecting college baskets for the annual [NSJ silent auction](#) held on March 22. Officers will pick them up when they visit your campus during the next few weeks.

So what can you do to wield your power as a union member?

- Be excellent in your classroom.
- Know the contract. It can be found at www.mscfmn.org.
- Be informed. Read up on the Janus case. Attend your local chapter meetings and sit in on your local Shared Governance meetings.
- Use your voice. Speak up when you see contract violations. Demand that politicians do what is right for our students. Let your union leaders know what you want from your union.
- Get engaged and get involved. Don't worry if you don't know what to do. Remember, union leaders are teachers too, and they are willing and would love to teach you what to do.
- Vote in local union elections, state union elections, as well as in the 2018 mid-term elections.
- Run for office. Having elections, not just volunteers or willing bodies, at our local chapters and at the state level will serve to strengthen our unions.
- Get your colleagues



Click on the picture above to view a legislative update from Mark Grant, MSCF legis. liaison

involved. We need united voices and many voices if we want change. Apathy will get us nowhere.

- Participate in the Working People's Day of Action Rally this Saturday, Feb. 24th, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the State Capitol Rotunda.
- Tell fair-share faculty why belonging to the union is important to you and ask them to join as members.
- Join the next class of the Emerging Leaders College.

To borrow from the late Pres. John F. Kennedy, "ask not what your union can do for you; ask what you can do for your union." If every single one of us would take on at least one extra step from the list above, in addition to all of the other amazing things we do, MSCF would be one incredibly powerful union.

Nellie Stone Johnson Silent Auction Baskets