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PROMISING FEBRUARY FOR IFO MEMBERS

by [Nancy Black](#), IFO State President and [Brent Jeffers](#), Chief Negotiator

Dear Colleagues:

The month of February is turning out to be an auspicious one for our membership. The tentative settlement agreement received an unprecedented 99 percent vote in favor of ratification from you on February 7, 2013. The IFO President, Staff, and Negotiating Team greatly appreciate all the support and patience demonstrated by our membership over the past two years of negotiations. Chancellor Rosenstone has scheduled a special Board of Trustees meeting on February 26, and will act on the IFO contract. Shortly after their vote, we will be working with our elected officials to get our contract through the legislative process and signed into law by the governor.

Negotiations for the IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement begin this spring. The IFO has received a written commitment from Chris Dale, MnSCU Sr. System Director for Employee Relations, to engage in interest-based bargaining over domestic partner benefits in the next IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement. The parties have agreed to negotiate from a position of mutual interest for these benefits that for more than a decade have been a priority of this organization. Governor Dayton has instructed the office of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) to include domestic partners in the next round of coalition bargaining over healthcare benefits for all Minnesota state employees. Health coalition bargaining begins this spring, and the IFO will push for the most comprehensive benefits possible for our LGBT colleagues and friends. The Chancellor's Office has also indicated a commitment to bargaining over domestic partner benefits in the Master Agreement beyond the insurance article, and we will negotiate for all domestic partner benefits in the contract as are afforded to a spouses and/or dependents. The IFO will also aggressively pursue legislation that will recognize marriage equality.

We would like to give special congratulations to our valued and long-serving IFO colleague, Clark Johnson of Mankato, on his election to the Minnesota House of Representatives! (See Stanton's article for details). We would also like to say thank you to faculty for your outstanding service to our students and the State of Minnesota. It cannot be said often enough.

MEMBER CLARK JOHNSON ELECTED TO LEGISLATURE

by [Russell Stanton](#), *IFO Director of Government Relations*

Clark Johnson has attended IFO Lobby Days many times as an IFO Government Relations Committee member from MSU-Mankato. However, he attended the IFO Lobby Day breakfast this week in a different role— as a campus area legislator. Johnson was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives on February 12th in a special election to fill a seat vacated by the resignation of former DFL Representative Terry Morrow, who resigned to become the director of the Uniform Laws Commission.



Johnson, a DFL'er, won the District 19A seat with 53.69% of the vote, over Republican Allen Quist who received 36.08%, and Independence candidate Tim Gieseke who received 10.24%. The IFO endorsed Johnson even before the DFL endorsing convention, and many IFO members volunteered and contributed to Johnson's campaign. Hundreds of faculty members and students live in the district, which includes parts of Mankato, North Mankato, St. Peter, and the surrounding rural areas.

Representative Johnson has been a faculty member and a student relations coordinator at MSU-Mankato for 28 years. He will continue in that role when the legislature is not in session. He served on the IFO Government Relations Committee for many years, including a term as co-chair, where he helped develop and advocate for IFO's legislative goals.

Johnson's legislative goals for the 2013 session include adopting a stable balanced budget for the state, reinvestment in education, and transportation improvements.

IFO MEMBERS MEET WITH TOP LEGISLATORS ON LOBBY DAYS

by [Russell Stanton](#), *IFO Director of Government Relations*

IFO faculty association presidents and members of the Government Relations Committee participated in IFO's annual "Lobby Days" on February 13th and 14th. The events included a dinner at which **Senate Higher Education Chair Terri Bonoff**, **House Higher Education Chair Gene Pelowski**, and **Office of Higher Education Director Larry Pogemiller** spoke, followed by a lively discussion of issues with faculty. Pogemiller is Governor Dayton's point person on higher education budget and policy matters.

On February 14th, the faculty started off with breakfast with their campus area legislators, during which faculty discussed IFO's legislative goals and positions. Nineteen campus area legislators attended—including newly-elected State **Representative Clark Johnson**.

The breakfast was followed by a meeting with legislative leaders, including **House Speaker Paul Thissen**, **Senate President Sandy Pappas**, **House Ways and Means Committee Chair Lyndon Carlson**, **Senate Capital Investment (bonding) Chair LeRoy Stumpf**, **House Capital Investment Chair Alice Hausman**, and **Republican lead on higher education, Rep. Bud Nornes**.

The messages from legislative leaders were quite positive compared to the past several years. Director Pogemiller noted that this is the first time ever that the area with the largest proposed increase in its budget is higher education. Speaker Thissen assured faculty that as soon as the MnSCU Board approves the IFO compensation agreement, the legislature is prepared to move it quickly through the ratification process. Both Sen. Stumpf and Rep. Hausman supported IFO's position for an off-year bonding bill. Sen. Bonoff seemed open to modifications of the financial aid programs to provide more assistance to working part-time students.

The most important message from legislators was the increase in financial support for higher education will depend upon the legislature raising more revenue to pay for the funding increases. Rep. Pelowski seemed pessimistic about

the ability to raise enough revenue to cover the increased higher education spending, but others, including House Speaker Paul Thissen and Ways and Means Chair Lyndon Carlson, seemed to think some significant revenue (tax) increases were feasible.



Karen Brandon and Monte Bute discuss student funding with OHE Director Larry Pogemiller



Steve Hornstein and Lyn MacDonald discuss higher education funding trends with Rep. Zach Dorholt (DFL-St. Cloud)



Senator Tom Saxhaug and Rep. Roger Erickson discuss IFO goals with BSU faculty members Chris Brown, Kathryn Smith, and Rod Henry

ADJUNCT AND COMMUNITY FACULTY CONTRACT BENEFITS

by [*Donna Blake*](#), IFO Controller

Once the 2011-2013 contract is approved by the MnSCU Board and the legislature, adjunct/community faculty will be entitled to a minimum rate of **\$1,258 per credit (retroactive to fall 2012)**. The adjunct/community faculty pay rate will be set at 3.6% of the Instructor step 1 rate, resulting in automatic pay raises for adjunct/community faculty as the value of the Instructor step 1 increases in future contract negotiations. Adjunct/community faculty will also be allowed to take up to two paid class days of sick leave and one day of personal leave per semester. Going forward, unused sick and personal leave will not carry over from semester to semester.

Did you know that under the IFO contract, Adjunct Faculty and Community Faculty get the following benefits?

1. Tuition waiver benefits for themselves and their families
2. Sick and personal leave
3. Retirement and other benefits
4. Professional Improvement Grant Funds (Community Faculty only)

To see a complete list of adjunct faculty benefits, visit the adjunct faculty webpage at:

<http://ifo.org/contractual-benefits/adjunct-community-faculty-benefits/>.

To see a complete list of community faculty benefits, visit the community faculty webpage at:

<http://ifo.org/contractual-benefits/community-faculty-benefits/>

If you have any questions on these benefits, please contact Connie Howard at howard@ifo.org. For retirement questions, please contact Russ Stanton at stanton@ifo.org.

ARE YOU SURE YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE IFO?

by [Donna Blake](#), *IFO Controller*

Until quite recently, Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) did not clearly identify union membership on paycheck notifications. They have changed their deduction designators, so the next time you receive a paycheck, please look to see how your union deduction is listed. If you see IFO FS, you are NOT a member. The FS designates that the deduction is a fair share fee. If you see IFO only, you are a member, and the deduction is your member dues. If you have any questions, please contact me at blake@ifo.org. To join instantly, please go to the home page of our website, www.ifo.org, and click on the "Become A Member, Join IFO" link at the top. Upon joining you will be mailed an IFO member ID card.

PRETAX ACCOUNT DEADLINE APPROACHING

by [Donna Blake](#), *IFO Controller*

Thursday, February 28, 2013, is the deadline for submitting 2012 Pre-Tax Medical Dental Expense Account (MDEA), Dependent Day Care Expense Account (DCEA), and Transit Expense Account (TEA) reimbursement requests.

Completed Reimbursement Requests either by paper forms or requests made online AND supporting documentation must be received by Eide Bailly by February 28, 2013. Requests received after the deadline will not be accepted and money remaining in the account will be forfeited, as required by federal law.

If you have a remaining balance in your 2009 or 2011 MMB Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) that has been moved forward into plan year 2012, you may submit 2012-expenses by February 28, 2013. Unlike your MDEA or DCEA, the unused balance in your 2009 or 2011 HRA may be carried forward into future years. However, beginning January 1, 2013, the monthly administrative fee of \$2.73 will be deducted from the account each month a balance remains in the MMB HRA. (Please note that there is no administration fee for balances remaining in your MnSCU HRA account provided per Article 11, Section G, of the IFO/MnSCU Contract.)

If you have questions about pre-tax accounts, contact Eide Bailly at 612-253-6633 or 1-800-300-1672. Information and forms are available on the Eide Bailly website at:

<http://www.eidebaillybenefits.com/som>

Reimbursement Request Forms and documentation can be submitted by fax at 612-253-6622, mailed to Eide Bailly Employee Benefits at U.S. Bank Corp Center, 800 Nicollet Mall, Suite 1350, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-7033, or submitted electronically through the webpage above by following the login instructions.

FEMINIST ISSUES COMMITTEE (FIC) CO-SPONSORS LILLY LEDBETTER LECTURE

by [Nancy Black](#), *IFO State President*

On March 26, 2013, Minnesota State University Mankato will have the honor of bringing Lilly Ledbetter, the trailblazer for fair pay, to their campus. As part of the Carol Ortman Perkin's 9th Annual Lectureship, Ms. Ledbetter will discuss her fight to close the gap between women's and men's wages through her 10-year discrimination case against Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. She is a woman of rare courage, and her unswerving perseverance has made an enormous difference in many women's lives including my own. The lecture will be held in the CSU Ballroom, beginning at 7:00 p.m. As a co-sponsor for this event, the IFO's Feminist Issues Committee received 20 tickets for the invite-only reception that will follow the lecture. Please contact Tiffany Nelson (nelson@ifo.org) if you are interested in a ticket for the reception.

DR. WAYNE ALEXANDER SEEKS TRA BOARD POSITION

by [Russell Stanton](#), *IFO Director of Government Relations*

Dr. Wayne Alexander, a long time professor in the School of Business at MSU Moorhead, is seeking an active-member elected position on the Board of the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA). TRA members are eligible to vote in the election.



TRA is the defined benefit retirement plan for all public school teachers in Minnesota, as well as thousands of MnSCU faculty who choose TRA instead of IRAP as their basic retirement plan. The retirement association has over 76,000 active participants and more than 53,000 members receiving benefits. The fund currently has assets of about \$16.5 billion dollars.

If you are a TRA participant, you should receive a ballot in mid-February, and you will have until March 29th to vote. Board positions for two active members and one retired member are up for election.

Dr. Alexander's educational background includes a Ph.D. in Business Administration from the University of Illinois, a Ph. D in Teaching and Learning from the University of North Dakota, an MBA from Fresno State College, and a B. S. in Business Administration, also from Fresno State College. He has taught at MSU Moorhead since

1977 and previously taught at the University of Texas at Arlington and Western Illinois University.

Alexander served on the IFO Board of Directors from 2004 to 2008. Currently, there are no higher education representatives on the TRA. Dr. Alexander believes he could bring a wealth of financial expertise to the TRA Board.

If you are a TRA member, remember to vote!

NEW CONTRACT LANGUAGE EXPANDS TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS

by [Connie Howard](#), *IFO General Counsel*

The proposed 2011-2013 IFO Master Agreement, recently ratified overwhelmingly by the IFO membership, will go into effect only after it is also approved by the MnSCU Board of Trustees and the Minnesota legislature and signed by the governor.

One of the many changes in the new contract concerns Article 19 Professional Study and Travel (19B) funds. This new language will allow faculty to use 19B funds to purchase technology to enhance their professional effectiveness.

19B funds may not be used to purchase routine equipment – such as computers, telephones and printers – that the university should be providing faculty to do their jobs. 19B funds should not be used to supplement department equipment budgets. However, such funds may be used to buy technology - currently items such as Kindles, Nooks or tablet computing devices – not routinely provided, so long as the technology purchase is “reasonably likely to enhance the faculty member’s effectiveness with respect to one or more of the five [evaluation] criteria set forth in Article 22.”

The new contract also clarifies the long-standing rule that tangible assets purchased with 19B funds are the property of the university. They are not the personal property of the faculty member. That means that when a faculty member retires or otherwise leaves a university, the university may request the return of items purchased with 19B funds.

University ownership of information technology purchased by faculty with 19B funds also means that the employer

reserves the right to monitor the contents of such devices. ([See MnSCU Procedure 5.22.1, Part 6, Subpart C](#))

Reasonable personal use of computers and other university information technology that does not add to the university's costs is not prohibited. In fact, thanks in large measure to astute lobbying by IFO Director of Government Relations Russ Stanton, state employees, including IFO-represented faculty, have a statutory right to "use state time, property, or equipment to communicate electronically with other persons including, but not limited to, elected officials, the employer, or an exclusive bargaining representative under chapter 179A, provided this use, including the value of the time spent, results in no incremental cost to the state or results in an incremental cost that is so small as to make accounting for it unreasonable or administratively impracticable." Minn. Stat. §43A.38, subd. 4(b)

However, faculty are responsible for the content of their personal use and may be disciplined for inappropriate use of state resources. Accordingly, faculty who use their Article 19B funds to buy information technology should treat such devices the same as they would their university computer. Since the employer may access content on university information technology without notice **faculty should not access or store personal e-mail messages or other content on university computers or other university-owned information technology that could give rise to discipline if discovered by management.**

CONTACT US

The IFO Faculty Update is published and distributed by the [Inter Faculty Organization](#). If you need to contact the Inter Faculty Organization, our mailing address is 490 Concordia Avenue, Suite 125, Saint Paul, MN 55103, or you can reach us by phone at 800/325-9644 or 651/227-8442. You can also send us an email by clicking [HERE](#).