

# Reflections on a Golden Anniversary

## The NCCFT at NCC 1968-2018

*by Professor Emeritus Philip Y. Nicholson (NCCFT President, 1987-99)*

COUNTY OF NASSAU  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS BOARD

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IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF THE :  
FACULTY SENATE OF NASSAU COMMUNITY :  
COLLEGE. :  
AN EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION, : CASE NO.: R-011  
FOR RECOGNITION AS THE DULY AUTHORIZED :  
REPRESENTATIVE OF CERTAIN DESIGNATED :  
EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF NASSAU. :  
A PUBLIC EMPLOYER :

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**FIRST CONTRACT, 1969 - 1971**



INSIDE FRONT COVER

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# **Introduction:**

## **We Are At A Moment of Rebirth**

I enrolled as a full-time student at Nassau Community College in 1970, just after being discharged from the United States Navy. I worked as a student-aid for Al Brecht in Audio-Visual, delivering films and projectors to classes on the old campus. The position gave me the opportunity to meet a variety of professors and witness a slice of their course. It was in that capacity that I was introduced to an American History class with a rather new professor who leaned somewhat to the left of what I was used to. His name was Dr. Phil Nicholson and he became one of the biggest influences in my life. I enrolled in his class and the change that ensued brought me from “crayons to perfume”. Actually, I moved politically from unabashedly displaying my dog-tags to becoming Nassau Campus Coordinator for Students for a Democratic Society—though I did still display my dog-tags, and still unabashedly, as a member of the Student Vietnam Era Veterans Against the War.

After two years at Nassau, studying and working with Phil and his colleagues and earning an Associate of Liberal Arts degree, I began to understand the inspiration, indoctrination and deceptions of the American myth; the value of being an educated citizen; and the power of organization and change—all of which culminated years later in my participation in the 1981 Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) strike. Upon being personally fired by President Ronald Reagan, I continued my college education at Nassau Community College while driving a yellow Checker cab in NYC (a story better told over a beer). In 1985, I earned an Associate of Applied Science degree and I was fortunate to obtain employment as a Technical Assistant in the Engineering/Physics/Technology department at Nassau. One of the first orders of business was to visit the Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers office where I was surprised to meet the NCCFT President, Dr. Phil Nicholson.

While I had learned and practiced many lessons from the days of being a student of Phil’s, the pressures of life had forced much of it into my subconscious until, after seeing him again, that spirit reignited within me. I recall attending my first Community College Conference with Phil and sitting at a table listening as he debated with Lou Stollar (of the

United College Employees of FIT) and Irwin Polishook and Richard Boris (of the Professional Staff Congress of CUNY) the realities of modern unionism, organizing issues and the restoration of the Bolshevik revolution. I knew at that moment where I wanted to be and what the promise of the future held.

As you will realize reading through this booklet, there were many faculty members at Nassau Community College, some of whom still teach here, who defined and pieced together the relationship between the Union, Senate and Chairs during the creation and early days of the college. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

There were many faculty, who during the 26 year tenure of College President Dr. Sean Fanelli, crafted the culture of unionism and shared governance that endures today. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

There were many faculty, who during the tenure of College Presidents Dr. Donald Astrab, Dr. Ken Saunders and Dr. Tom Dolan put their credibility at risk in exposing both an ineffectual leadership that neither understood nor cared about the culture of Nassau Community College and how that leadership's incompetence led to our probationary crisis with the Middle States Commission for Higher Education (MSCHE). We owe them a debt of gratitude.

And we owe a debt of gratitude as well to the many faculty who worked and are working now, professionally, tirelessly and selflessly, under the leadership of President Dr. Hubert Keen to resolve our MSCHE issues and restore our confidence, success and good will.

As we mark this 50th Anniversary of the NCCFT, we are also at a moment of rebirth. We have maintained one of the most comprehensive and successful labor contracts in Higher Education, one that enshrines a system of shared governance that includes, among other highlights, our Academic Senate, Promotion and Tenure, Sabbaticals, Academic Department governance, due process discipline and the grievance process. We will continue to enjoy those contractually protected benefits, however, only if we maintain the commitment and spirit of those faculty members whose contributions have brought us to where we are today. In this publication, Dr. Phil Nicholson is giving us the opportunity to remember from whence we came. Let us not forget those who came before us and for that and more, we owe Phil a debt of gratitude.

Frank Frisenda, NCCFT President/2018

# **THE NCCFT AT NCC: REFLECTIONS ON A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY 1968-2018**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nassau Community College came into existence at an optimistic time in America. Victorious in World War II and possessed of an economy that promised growth and opportunity as never before, the nation seemed capable of fulfilling the dreams of its founders. The great challenges of the Soviet Union and Communist China presented an opportunity for the United States to show leadership in democracy for the rest of the world. To achieve that objective, our nation had to expand its opportunities to its own people as never before. One way was to open up its educational horizons to more of its citizens; the other was to remove the last major barrier to achieving its own democracy by ending the subordinate status of its African-American population. Both goals seemed possible and both proceeded apace. The times were also friendly to the idea of democracy in the workplace as nearly a third of all working Americans were represented by unions, the highest percentage and greatest union density in the nation's history.

## **THE FOUNDING OF NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

We probably owe the former Soviet Union some credit for the founding of Nassau Community College. Its successful launch of a "sputnik" in October, 1957 revived public interest and support for American education. New and innovative programs were initiated during the second term of President Eisenhower's administration to keep the U.S.A. a leader in the areas of science and technology. NYS Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Assembly Majority Leader Joseph Carlino (R. Long Beach) took decisive steps in that direction when in 1959 they expanded the State's trade and technical institutes into a broad public university and community college network.

## **THE COURTHOUSE DAYS AND THE MOVE TO MITCHELL FIELD**

Between February 1960 and November 1962, NCC's first classrooms and offices were located in Mineola in a wing of the old Nassau County Courthouse with 500 full-time and 900 part-time students served by 30 hastily recruited faculty members. This was the College's makeshift home until the County could complete arrangements with the Federal government to acquire most of the decommissioned military facilities at the 206.5 acre Mitchell Field Complex and prepare the buildings for occupancy.

## **BLACKBOARD FRONTIER**

An unfinished atmosphere existed on campus during the first decade of rapid growth of faculty, students, and facilities. The campus was filled with the optimism and real economic prosperity of a booming national and suburban era. A sign on the Long Island Expressway boasted "Welcome to Nassau County: The Fastest Growing Community in the Nation". The college's first president, the remote and autocratic General Blackshire Bryant (ret. U.S. Army) was appointed to oversee this uncertain world. President Bryant's front line decisions fell almost completely to his administrators, Charlie Laffin, Bob Gwydir, Bob Gersten, and Marvin Rapp. Vocational, certificate, and technical programs beyond high school were not widely available in the early 1960's, and a college education was not envisioned for everyone. The "junior college" idea was embraced as an entry level opportunity for traditional liberal arts students in Nassau County. In fact, until 1965, most of the full-time faculty and staff that were hired were told that NCC would soon become a four-year school similar to Queens College. Indeed, some fine young teachers were recruited with that expectation. Among them, Dr. Terry O'Dwyer (Professor Emeritus, Engineering, Physics) and Dr. Salvatore La Gumina (Professor Emeritus, History) who are still on campus today for an adjunct course or two, will be happy to reminisce with you about those earliest days.

During the first few years, scant attention was paid to such questions as faculty rights, democratic governance, or due process. Doris Shaffer and Nuala Drescher (both from the History Dept.), formed the first NCC chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in 1962. They were true pioneers. The AAUP Charter they received was the very first (!) ever granted to a two-year college. Within a couple of years, Doris and Nuala had built an AAUP membership that included almost 90%

of the NCC faculty. This faculty, alert to the high standards of the AAUP, built our academic governance on that foundation a few years later.

## **TO MITCHELL FIELD**

The move from the Courthouse to Mitchell Field wasn't easy. Old brick buildings were in the process of renovation. Hastily built temporary WWII structures housed science, math, art, music and foreign language departments. A charming old chapel served as a more appealing theater than the one we have today. In most departments, faculty desks and offices were grouped together in large, open spaces that created pleasant social interactions but offered little privacy. However, the newly-renovated former Army Air Corps Base did offer the amenities of a large, chestnut tree-rimmed quadrangle, expansive runways for parking, and airplane hangars that served as a gym and theater for more than a decade. Those brick buildings, houses, and trees contributed to a uniquely pleasant campus environment that was not typical of most community colleges.

This was a time of rapid expansion of the faculty. Since everybody was a newcomer in those earliest years, people formed close personal relationships that have lasted ever since. County politicians secured jobs for their friends and relatives, especially among the part-time staff. Why, we even provided teaching jobs for some county judges on our adjunct payroll back then.

Dr. George Chambers became President of the College in 1965. Dr. Chambers came from the University of Pittsburgh where he had served the Chancellor as Director of Development during years of rapid expansion. He brought with him as his office manager Bob Lukitsh who, after completing degrees at NCC and Hofstra University, became NCC Vice President for Administration. Mr. Lukitsh was a key decision maker and the chief negotiator for the college administration for almost ten years. As in most of higher education in this period, the administrative style of Chambers and Lukitsh was autocratic, paternalistic, and arbitrary.

There was no union, no collective bargaining until 1969, no union affiliation until 1971, and little due process in dealing with areas of conflict or contention. However, proximity to the cultural amenities of New York City and the attractive campus helped to lure and keep what soon became the most talented and highly qualified community college faculty in the country.

Unfortunately, in those boomer days, local political influence often prevailed over good professional judgment. Some decisions were made that created a continuing residue of conflict. This shadowy influence included appointments. Chairpersons of departments, for example, were appointed by administrators and answerable only to them. Rent and maintenance-free housing in seventeen former officer dwellings were offered to administrators and some select faculty. A discretionary fund allowed the college president to throw big cocktail parties and lavishly entertain without much accountability. Trustees met and did all their business privately in an atmosphere of aloofness. Hiring, firing, promotions, tenure, and the awarding of sabbatical leaves were administrative decisions that were made with only cursory advice or recommendations from the faculty or departments.

Democratic decision making was virtually non-existent. The administration dominated the Faculty Senate and departmental decision making. There was no faculty governance procedure that allowed a neutral arbitrator or mediator to play a role in resolving disputes. Faculty could be fired or denied promotion without a hearing. Many were dismissed or turned down for promotion while those who achieved tenure, a promotion or sabbatical leave were dependent on administrators for what they received. But these were the early and middle 1960's and changes were "blowin' in the wind."

The Civil Rights movement breathed new life into American democracy in spite of the chilling effects of McCarthyism and the Cold War. Students were mobilizing on behalf of their own issues by the middle of the 1960's and challenging almost every bastion of authority-cultural, civil, religious, and parental. The war in Vietnam was vigorously debated on almost every campus in America. The movement for unionization of teachers and public employees added tremendous strength to an already mighty national labor structure and tradition. In 1962 an executive order by President John F. Kennedy extended collective bargaining rights to all federal employees. States would soon follow that example. By 1965, approximately one-third of the American work force was protected by collective bargaining rights in an era when good wages and salaries were still a vital part of a prosperous nation. The tax system, built during depression and war, was still progressive, so the cost of public services and education did not fall heavily or unfairly on middle and working class families.



## UNIONIZATION AND THE FIRST CONTRACTS

NYS enacted the Taylor Law to give public employees the right to collective bargaining beginning in 1968, though it was not until 1971 that the NCC faculty voted for formal union affiliation. Professors John Wood and Aaron Schein of the Mathematics Department immediately filed a petition for a collective bargaining election that would have brought us within the ranks of the American Federation of Teachers and the AFL-CIO. A majority of faculty members were skeptical about this move and voted instead to reorganize the Faculty Senate, without administrators, into an independent and unaffiliated bargaining unit, our first faculty union. Elections were held and our first faculty leaders and negotiators began to create our first collective bargaining agreement. They were Jack Berland (Accounting and Business), Bernie Katz (Psychology), Doris Shaffer (History), Gene Glickman (Music), Ruth Anderson (Nursing), and Manny Finkel (Library); and in 1971, Bernie Katz, Jack Berland, Gerald Pintel (Accounting and Business), Gene Glickman, John Wood, Terry O'Dwyer (Engineering), Doris Shaffer, Aaron Schein, Vic Margolis (Student Personnel Services), Michael Corpuel (Physical Education), and Martha Robbins (History) joined or continued in the group.

In the first contract negotiations, the Faculty Senate team built its successful contract on two fundamental positions: 1) Faculty governance and due process should conform to the highest principles laid out as standards by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). All academic matters would have democratic procedures for discussion and decision making. Academic freedom and faculty rights would conform to the 1940 AAUP "Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" which were (and still are) the highest standard extant. 2) Salaries, fringe benefits, and working conditions should be set on a par with the City University of New York (CUNY) and the prevailing salaries for teachers and public employees in our area. At this time, department chairpersons were administrative appointees and outside the bargaining unit.

Negotiations in 1969 were tense and frustrating for the team. College and some County officials stalled, dissembled, acted in a callous and haughty manner, played games (literally), and made veiled and overt threats to the faculty. Gene and Jack brought their sleeping bags and a chess set to one all-night bargaining session. Their combined intelligence

and tenacity on and off the board offset the arbitrariness of their rivals. Doris showed a tough and persistent determination that helped carry the team through. She was familiar with the standards and principles of academic due process and democratic governance when almost no one else had given much time or thought to those things. Bernie's humor, decency, and straightforward style kept the faculty together, while Ruth and Manny brought experience and worldliness to the process.

The team brought forth agreements that were the foundation for what evolved to become the most outstanding faculty college contract in America. Those early victories did not come easily or without real battles. Lines were drawn. The goals of the faculty and the goals of the administration were not the same. Bargaining was long and arduous, but principled agreements with real substance were the result. The first contract was eighteen pages long. It included the two-thirds rule for commencement attendance and obliged the College to pay for academic attire. Salaries ranged from \$9,372 for an instructor at step 1 to \$28,817 for the few full professors at the top (12th) step in 1970. Professional scales ranged from P-1, step 1 at \$7,679 to P-6, step 12 at \$22,896. For comparable purchasing power in 2017, multiply by eight! The creation of a college-wide Promotion and Tenure Committee and departmental Personnel and Budget Committees set the foundation for democratic governance.

## **ON STRIKE**

In the second contract negotiations in 1971, the College moved to increase the workweek from twelve to fifteen contact hours. Faculty had received normal schedules (twelve contact hours) at the end of the Spring Semester and were now faced with new fifteen contact hour schedules as classes were about to resume, though a new contract had not yet been concluded. A favorable vote was taken at a faculty meeting on Phil Nicholson's (History) resolution to work the original schedules, not the new ones. The campus was thrown into turmoil for about two weeks as the college administration sought unsuccessfully to impose the enlarged programs. In effect, we were on strike. No Triborough court ruling or state law secured existing contract provisions after their expiration. Our action may have hastened the setting of that precedent for other public unions.

The College went to court. Judge Joseph Liff of the NYS Supreme Court imposed an injunction against our action and negotiations were intensified. The settlement ultimately saved the twelve contact-hour program for our largest department, English, and we all won some salary and fringe benefit gains. We were forced to accept a one-day strike penalty of two days lost pay under the punitive and still extant Taylor Law. The strike was an important unifying episode for faculty. We stood together.

The 1971 job action also prompted us to move toward affiliation with an established union organization. We realized that our legal, financial, and political resources were too limited if we stood alone. We needed the legal strength and political experience that a larger group could bring to future struggles. A two-person committee of Paul Devendittis and Phil Nicholson (both from History) interviewed local unionists from the Teamsters, the National Education Association (NEA), and United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and recommended joining the UFT. This latter association brought us into New York State United Teachers where we remain. Paul became our first union president in 1972 and Doris Shaffer succeeded him in 1973. When the 1971 contract placed the Academic Senate within the collective bargaining agreement, the era of benevolent administrative paternalism began to fade away. In contrast to the original Senate, which, as a union, only included faculty, the newly negotiated structure included student and administrative representatives. Our contract gave, and continues to provide, legal authority and stability to governance decisions made in the Senate. It is a model sought after by many institutions in higher education where governance is not firmly established under contract law.

Chairpersons successfully petitioned the Nassau County Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) for inclusion in the union in April 1975 and have been the elected leaders of their various disciplines ever since. Many of the original administration-appointed chairs were elected by their department faculty to stay on. Some faced challengers and gave up their positions.

## **GROWING PAINS**

Our first contract in 1969 was for a two-year term and the 1971 agreement was for three. In 1974, the two-year contract provided for a salary re-opener in the second year, but no increase was guaranteed and

none came. We were all learning fast. Doris quickly mastered the skills of collective bargaining and contract administration and led the new organization to a bigger role in state and national faculty unionism. We began to attend conferences and meetings of academic unionists. New unions were being formed under the Taylor Law in New York State and certified by Nassau County PERB. In 1975, Doris asked Gene Glickman and Phil Nicholson to attend a Pittsburgh meeting aimed at building a national coalition of academic unionists to spearhead a cross-affiliation organizing drive. Our own adjunct faculty was recognized by Nassau PERB for collective bargaining in 1974 after a frustrating five-year delay. Paul, Phil, and Bob Strain (Economics) had opened the door to independent adjunct unionization in 1969 after the full-time faculty had rejected AFT unionization. John Meehan (adjunct, English) filed a competing petition, supported by the New York State Teachers Association (NYSTA), and PERB delayed recognition until a compromise was reached by full and part-time faculty to allow the two fraternal units to bargain separately. The NCCFT held an observer's seat on the adjunct negotiating team and naively believed that the two groups could be separated and peacefully co-exist.

## **JURISDICTIONAL CONFLICT**

Job security was a natural priority for part-time teachers for whom the normal tenure protection was non-existent and last minute hiring decisions commonplace. At the same time, the opportunity for extra evening and summer teaching opportunities for either new or long-term regular faculty was a desirable option no one wanted to give up. Overtime is customarily part of any form of employment before outsiders are hired. A complex compromise, called the "Ganson Plan" for our union vice president, Jack Ganson (Chemistry), was worked out by the two unions to protect job rights for well-established adjuncts, but also to allow opportunities for extra work to more recently hired full-timers.

At the adjunct bargaining table in 1974, the delicate agreement suffered a fatal blow when "priority appointments" were allowed to supersede seniority. The College President, George Chambers, gained the right to make fifty appointments, and the AFA President, John Meehan, secured the right to assign thirty jobs each semester (Spring, Summer, Fall) before the application of the just modified "Ganson Plan" seniority system. President Chambers was barred from hiring full-timers

among his priority appointments. The AFA President claimed the need for his thirty appointments to protect the jobs of AFA union department representatives, but was not restricted to that use alone. He could (and did) selectively displace (bump) anyone he wished by this method. So did President Chambers. Manipulation of these appointments allowed the “freezing out” of AFA critics and encouraged cronyism, political patronage, and disregard of qualifications among the job assignments made from 1975-1982.

The Middle States Association (MSA) immediately began a criticism of this unprofessional division of the institution and accused Nassau County of excessive political intervention in College matters in its first full accreditation report in 1975. These charges finally led to an accreditation crisis and the termination of priority appointments and the self-selection of courses by adjuncts based solely on seniority. Two different sets of procedures for appointment, promotion, and evaluation have plagued the College ever since.

The NCCFT took immediate action in 1975 as well. We petitioned the Nassau County Public Employees Board (PERB) unsuccessfully several times over the ensuing decade to challenge the control the AFA now held over our own members when it became clear it was hostile to full-time interests. AFT President Albert Shanker intervened in 1976 to begin a long process of seeking a compromise between the two locals that ended with the AFA's disaffiliation from NYSUT, the AFT, and the AFL-CIO in 1984.

Over the years, the AFA consistently refused all negotiated or mediated approaches to areas of conflict, large or small. The AFA refused all proposals for compromise or reconciliation that were put forward, first by the prominent New York City labor attorney, Theodore Kheel, then by President Al Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers, followed the NYSUT President Tom Hobart, then Bob Porter and Al Fondi who were national officers of the AFT, and John Pessala, who was Counsel to County Executive Thomas Gulotta. Finally, college Trustees William Domroe, Dominic Villoni, and Stephanie Kaufman became involved.

The Middle State Association (MSA) finally put NCC accreditation on “show cause” order status in 1989 until a new system of course assignment was adopted in 1991 to assure guarantees that professional qualification standards would play a part in assigning adjunct faculty. To

meet a “one-college” concept, the NCCFT added to its contract a Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures clause for the Evaluation and Assignment of Faculty, but the AFA never accepted the new standard. Their complex and disputed retention pool system went into operation in January 1992. Regular grievances and unresolved differences of interpretation continued to plague the various parties, though unitary standards for minimum qualifications for teaching were set by the departments.

After fifty years of collective bargaining, five administrations, four decertification procedures, dozens of grievances, constant court battles, and many hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, assignment practices remain contentious. The AFA went to the extraordinary length of seeking to block the County's approval of the 1995-2000 NCCFT Contract by conducting an eight month campaign of smear and deceit against it. This long melodrama served as fodder for the AFA's demagogic leadership and its attorney's retainer. Resolution of the issues could make both redundant. Only the aging out and retirement of many faculty on both sides and the failure to replace full time faculty who depart have provided growing opportunities for adjunct employment. Hence, the importance of this issue has been reduced to the two unions. Unfortunately, adjunct faculty lack office space, are without an on-campus computer connection, have no association with governance matters, have no scheduled counseling or advisement duties, and do not receive proportionate salary, benefits, or the security of tenure. As fine as most adjunct faculty may be in the classroom, both the students and the institution remain shortchanged and underserved by this deplorable situation, a nationwide educational disgrace that is especially acute in the public sector that most students attend. Cheap adjunct labor displaced and de-professionalized academic labor everywhere over the last fifty years, including most recently here at NCC.

## **CONTRACTS IN THE LATER 70s**

Three bitterly fought contracts marked the remainder of the decade of the 1970s. No agreement was made without the need to form a Crisis Committee or a Strike Preparation Committee. In every case, the faculty was forced to set a deadline for the negotiating team beyond which they refused to enter the classroom without an acceptable contract.

In 1974 and 1976, administrators were emboldened by more restrictive court and state PERB decisions that sought to limit the scope of collective bargaining. Governance issues vital to an academic community were ruled “non-mandatory” items for negotiations. College officials started out on several occasions by seeking to delete vast sections of our collective bargaining agreement. Elected faculty committees, the Academic Senate, departmental autonomy, promotion, tenure, and sabbatical leave procedures were all under fire.

Haughty arrogance characterized some County and College administration attitudes toward the union negotiating team. Distrust prevented a candid exchange about serious issues. NCCFT Secretary Bob Karmon (English) and Phil Nicholson remember how difficult it was to pry an answer to the question, “What do you really want here?” from President Robert Gwydir and Vice President Al Donor. Once Bob and Phil finally realized that there was some (usually small) substance behind their bluster on the teacher evaluation issue, for example, the team responded with a counter proposal that met the college halfway without sacrificing due process.

Many other New York State community college faculty suffered governance losses--or failed to win them at all--during this period, but at NCC we actually strengthened our faculty and professional rights. Salary increases kept us up with spiking inflation rates for the most part, and there too we gradually pulled ahead of many other comparable institutions including our former model, the City University of New York.

New York State pledged itself to assume 40% of community college costs if they became open enrollment institutions, so we joined most of the others in moving ahead with the remedial and other support services that such a change required. However, New York State never kept its pledge and rising costs were gradually shifted to the local sponsor, Nassau County, and to the students themselves in the form of tuition hikes. At the same time, the Federal government was shutting down its educational support programs, so bargaining with County leaders, who were carrying more of the costs, became even more important.

### **CONTRACTS IN THE 80s AND 90s:**

In the middle 1970s and early 1980s, the union had some new faces. Doris was joined on the Executive Committee by Vera Jerwick (Library),

Curlie Faber (HPER), Phil Nicholson, Bob Karmon, Aaron Seligman (Math), Bill Piervincenzi (Biology), and Barry Fischler (Registrar). The Committee had to fight hard to hold on to earlier victories throughout the 80s. Wild leaps of inflation (more than 14% in one year) eroded hard won salary gains.

Public attacks on sabbatical leaves by politicians (Hempstead Town Supervisor Al D'Amato, for example) forced us to reduce our totals to no more than ten per year during 1981-1982. That was increased to twenty per year (ten half-year at full pay and ten full-year at half pay) from 1983-1988, and then to twenty-two (ten and twelve) in 1988-1990, and twenty-four (ten and fourteen) in 1991.

Promotion numbers were also cut and time-in-rank requirements increased so that in 1982 only a total of twenty-four faculty could be promoted to the highest two ranks. After the 1982 negotiations, the numbers were doubled to allow forty-eight available slots per year--the distribution to be based on the size of the eligibility pools as determined by the NCCFT and the College. Professional employee promotions were similarly cut back, then won back.

Through all of the years of her presidency (1973-1987), Doris never went to the bargaining table without a carefully developed package and a fully informed and unified faculty. In every contract negotiation, the faculty was mobilized for massive turn-outs at trustee and county supervisor meetings, information picketing, demonstrations, and strike preparations. No contract was made without effective faculty action. Several contracts were concluded in the early morning hours as faculty picket lines began to form (1979, 1982, 1985) at College entrances and a strike was imminent. One morning, classes were delayed a bit because of the uncertainty of the last minute contract deal. Off-campus strike headquarters and telephone service were always at the ready and would have been put to use if necessary. The negotiating teams celebrated several all-night sessions with eggs and muffins at local diners. No breakfasts ever tasted better.

After Doris retired in 1987, Phil took on the presidency and Barbara Horn (English), Dorothy Cooke (Nursing), and Larry Cohen (Math) were added to the Executive Committee. The officers moved the NCCFT toward greater activism in local government for two reasons: 1) As New York State froze or cut its share of support for community colleges, Nassau County government and the Board of Trustees assumed more



direct responsibility for college budgets and policy making. Issues of academic freedom, health and safety, and accreditation standards were subject more to local jurisdiction than that of New York State. We were living through the consequences of President Ronald Reagan's "New Federalism." 2) It was evident that there really were some elected local government figures who defended NCC, its faculty, its budgets, contracts, and its high standards. Sometimes they took risks in making public statements on controversial matters like Hempstead Town Supervisor Gregory Peterson did when our academic freedom was attacked in a crowded public meeting by angry critics of PED 251 (Family Living and Human Sexuality). As public employees, we saw the need for policy makers and leaders who could resist narrow partisan pressures or ideological extremism and defend the integrity of our institution and its public mission. NYSUT's VOTE/COPE program brought us into closer contact with elected government leaders and enabled us to endorse and support those in local government who built good records on education issues important to us.

Contracts from 1988 to 1999 reflected some of the shift to greater local government interest as well as an increasing role on the part of the college trustees. A lag payroll in 1988; a one (1991), then a two-year (1995) wage freeze agreement were concessions that made other gains possible. New salary steps (6 of them!) were added to our scales in 1991, along with significant fringe benefit improvements.

In 1994 a conflict between the County Executive, Thomas S. Gulotta, and the very independent new County Controller Fred Parola led to an incomplete salary re-opener and all-out negotiations in 1995. Trustees placed themselves more prominently in the process because of unresolved issues with the adjunct faculty and a desire to play a more active role in all aspects of collective bargaining. They came to the table represented by their own attorney, John Gross, as joint employer with the county. The attorney, Peter Bee was counsel for Nassau County. Now our agreement had to satisfy the County Executive and Controller, the college administration and trustees, and finally pass through the lame-duck (1995) Board of Supervisors as well. At their final meeting in December, 1995, the soon-to-be-replaced Board allowed a minority vote to table our contract and put it before the new County Legislature, a process that took until July, 1996 for ratification, first by passing two committees, then an approval vote of the full body. Future contracts

would have to pass through the same full gauntlet, a process that allows political in-fighting and grandstanding to undermine good faith negotiations and agreements. The union would have to continue its political activism or risk the derailment of its contracts.

## **CONTINUITY AND LOSS:**

### **NCCFT IN THE NEW MILLENIUM, 2000-2017**

Aaron Seligman took over the presidency of the NCCFT on the retirement of Phil Nicholson from leadership in 1999. Aaron's long experience as Treasurer of the union combined with the continuation of the entire Executive Committee seemed to assure the strength and stability of the organization. Unfortunately, soon after taking office Aaron became ill with the cancer that took his life at the very end of 2003. Despite the increasing debilitation of illness he was able to add impressive gains for the faculty and pass on to his successors a new contract in 2001. Like the Mary Jane candy he loved so much, Aaron continued to provide his own brand of toughness and sweetness to every aspect of the job, including his preparation of a new leadership. Fran Hilliard (Nursing), who joined the executive Committee as the union's new Secretary (1999-2002), then became Vice-President (2002-2004), fondly remembered Aaron's patient coaching and conversations over the last few months of his life as she prepared to take on the job.

As President of the NCCFT, Fran had additional preparation for the position from her service as chairperson of the Political Action Committee during the last few years of Phil's presidency. She knew her way around Albany and Mineola, knew those who were friendly and supportive of the mission of Nassau Community College, and could see the limitations of the new County Executive, Thomas Suozzi, when the Democratic Party ousted the Republicans for the first time in more than three decades. Suozzi once spoke openly in a public meeting about the possibility of privatizing the college. Fortunately, Fran was able to utilize the excellent relationships that had been built with Peter Schmitt (R) and Judy Jacobs (D), both leading members of the County Legislature, both of whom "were always willing to meet with the Union and were strong advocates for the College." Sadly, both of these fine people have passed from the scene in the last few years.

During her time in office Fran continued to deal with the familiar areas of conflict that seem inherent parts of the labor-management

relationship at NCC: 1) maintaining the academic governance structure of the contract despite continuing administrative attempts to undermine it; 2) budgetary battles with the County over adequate and fair funding of the College; 3) the ongoing division of the faculty into two unions, the NCCFT and the AFA. Fran credits NCC President Sean Fanelli with a willingness to reconcile disputes with other members of his administration when it came to governance conflicts, a feature that would not continue after his departure. Both Aaron and Fran sought and achieved some reconciliation with the AFA so that the two unions could work together on issues of mutual concern such as campus health and safety. That cooperation, along with that of the Academic Senate leaders and its Chairs Committee, continued through the successful ouster of President Fanelli's replacement, Dr. Donald Astrab, and the termination of Astrab's replacement, Dr. Kenneth Saunders from the presidency of the College in 2016. The battle with the College Board of Trustees over the college presidency was only concluded successfully because of the unity of all of the faculty components and the leadership of the union. An outstanding and long overdue discrepancy between classroom and non-classroom professional faculty was resolved during Fran's leadership when she was able to negotiate the inclusion of "Emergency Days" (snow days) for non-classroom faculty.

## **THE CONTEMPORARY UNION**

One of the most remarkable features of our union's history has been the inclusion of former NCC students who later became faculty members and then entered into the organization's leadership. Fran Izzo (soon to become Fran Hilliard) was one of those, and so was current NCCFT President, Frank Frisenda. M. Debra DeSanto (Administrative Business Technology) succeeded Barry Fischler as the President (2007-2009), and brought her long union experience on the Adjunct Faculty Association Board to good use as the leader of the NCCFT (2009-2015). Debbie continued the more cordial relations with the AFA that began under Fran's leadership. That unity, along with the cohesion formed among the Chair of the Chairs Committee, Lynn Mazzola (Accounting and Business), and the Chairs of the Academic Senate, Kimberley Reiser (Biology) and Edward Boyden (History), during those tumultuous years was made more important by the crisis brought on by the failed college presidencies of Donald Astrab and Kenneth Saunders.

Union presidents of the NCCFT share a common belief: when they held the job it was much more demanding and more loaded with complex difficulties than it was for their predecessor. For Debbie that feeling was certainly well grounded in the near chaos brought to the college by a combination of an incompetent and highly politicized College Board of Trustees and the consequent administrative collapse that ensued. Things went from bad to worse after Astrab fired the only academic leaders at NCC, Vice President Jack Ostling in 2010 and Associate Vice President Carol Farber a year later. For all of Jack's quirks, (he finally quit smoking after a few years at NCC), he knew the faculty and the institutional mechanisms well, and he was possessed of a real academic foundation. Carol Farber took over a fledgling Honors Program and built it into one of the most formidable programs of its kind in the nation. She knew and had close working relationships with just about the entire faculty. With Carol and Jack gone, the remaining crew was inept, out of touch, and became increasingly defensive. Hostility and distrust accompanied every decision that followed. Budget cuts from Albany and freezes from Mineola compounded the already toxic mix. Astrab's incompetence was most dramatically demonstrated in President DeSanto's successful grievance that affirmed the four-semester conversion of temporary lines to probationary status as set by NCCFT and College precedent. Debbie's drawn out summertime negotiations to save many of the temporary positions that were so abruptly terminated by then-President Astrab added to her conviction that none of her predecessors carried more on their shoulders than she did while in office.

The problem with the job of NCCFT president has always been its limitless demands on the time and energy of the person in charge. To do the job well, the president has all of the union's issues and problems in the foreground of his/her life all the time. Every decision has consequences, some immediate, others long term. Fran remembers Aaron's constant refrain, "what if?" on nearly every important decision or agreement that they confronted. The leader carries a "sense of responsibility" that never goes away. Debbie deserves special notice for withstanding assaults by the County on the fully covered faculty health insurance during one of the meanest collective bargaining battles in recent history.

## **LESS PROMINENT BUT NO LESS VALUABLE UNION SERVICES**

Some union accomplishments get more attention than others. The services to individuals rarely are noticed, even when they make a big difference. Union assistance to people in grievances against the college are an example of the value of union representation that may only bring an immediate benefit to one person, though every successful grievance strengthens the contract. Another role of the union that generally goes unnoticed by everyone outside the battle lines is the resolution of conflicts before they reach the level of a formal grievance procedure. So too are the memoranda of agreement between the union and the College to resolve issues not taken up fully at the collective bargaining table, but that need to be dealt with during the life of a contract. When union leaders take an active part at the conferences of the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) it is to everyone's benefit, though hardly noticed. So too are the day-to-day relationships between the union and the administration where personal trust, mutual respect, and a recognition of the legitimacy of the other side can make a big difference in everyday life. When he was President of the NCCFT (2007-2009) and also the College Registrar, Barry Fischler probably knew everybody on the campus better than anyone else. Those personal connections and friendships were part of the trust that helped create a genuine community among otherwise very different professional people with very different personalities.

## **INNOVATION AND REFORM**

The NCCFT is justifiably proud of the leading role it has played in every aspect of educational progress made at NCC over nearly fifty years. Our Academic Senate is unique in many ways, not least of which is its legal authority as part of the contract. Faculty governance, with administration and student participation, over all academic and curricular matters, is not a managerial gift or an informal process that can be halted or casually withdrawn. New courses, new programs, degree requirements, class size limits, and grade policy are among the many important decisions made openly and through contractually protected democratic procedures that few colleges or universities can duplicate, though many have sought to adopt or copy. The contract clauses that describe our Academic Senate have been reviewed, admired, and incorporated (where possible) in colleges throughout New York State

and the nation. Innovations in distance learning, such as off-campus radio, TV, and internet courses, are possible because our contract allows for their development within equitable professional guidelines and with proper compensation for faculty. Every new program of multi-disciplinary courses, such as Afro-American Studies, Basic Education, Honors, English as a Second Language, and Women's Studies, functions within our contract provisions, and most included a specific union officer or representative on the committee that helped to get them off the ground. Almost every major college-sponsored conference or colloquium for more than a decade has enjoyed the co-sponsorship, active support, and participation of the NCCFT. Classroom pedagogical issues, new intellectual frontiers, and technological challenges have regularly been our subjects and we have enjoyed talks and presentations by prominent scholars and experts. President DeSanto was justifiably proud of the contract language she and NCCFT Secretary, Dr. Elizabeth Wood (Sociology) developed for computer-driven distance education. Their online course provisions won a Best Practices award in our area and have led to the successful expansion of this practice ever since.

The NCCFT has a long history of standing behind the protection of human and civil rights. From the first contract clause that prohibited discrimination across the board, to more recent precedent setting agreements that won benefit rights to “partners” before marriage equality was upheld by the US Supreme Court, the NCCFT was at the forefront of struggle. Because the Academic Senate sets institutional policies required by law for affirmative action, sexual harassment, and non-discrimination, the NCCFT meets with committee and college leaders to assure the contractual and legal rights of its members. The union confers with its own attorneys and attends state and national conferences that take up these issues. Since the NCCFT has often broken innovative ground, its leaders help to organize and plan the agendas for these meetings. They often lead the discussion, and they always learn new ways to meet the newest challenges. NCCFT officers also sit on every important Search Committee when new administrators are sought for the College. Open searches, with NCCFT participation, have, for the most part, done very well for our school until the retirement of Dr. Sean Fanelli in 2011.

In other college concerns, such as community relations, local government dialogue and support, and cross-institutional activities, the

NCCFT played an active and leading role. Its VOTE/COPE programs have regularly brought NYS and Nassau County leaders to campus brunches and luncheon meetings that focus on the budgetary and public policy needs of our institution. Albany and Mineola government leaders recognize the NCCFT's lobbying and educational efforts as the most prominent and effective in the State. Union members can verify that esteem by attending any of the Political Action Committee programs or joining committee members on their regular treks to Albany to lobby for the needs of public higher education.

## PEOPLE

It is impossible to tell the full story of this union without recalling some of the names and faces of the people who either served in an elected or appointed role, or showed their friendship or solidarity to the union in their own way. (See Appendix #1). Unlike many unions, the NCCFT has tried to keep itself open to the participation and the ideas of its members. It has been fortunate to enjoy the activism of most of the best and most talented of its members over the first half century of its existence.

The Math and History Departments deserve special mention for providing the union with so many of our strongest early union people. Doris (President 1973-1987) and Phil (President 1987-1999) got lots of attention as union leaders but no successful organization can rely on a solitary figure, no matter how capable or hard working they may be.

Though his service as Secretary was cut tragically short by his untimely death in 1977, Joe Carlino, Jr. (Math) was the kind of college leader everyone respected and admired. His cool logic and intelligence brought precision and reason to every negotiation and problem-solving situation where he was present. His sense of proportion and humor deflated egos and added calm to heated atmospheres.

John Wood (Math) likes to think of himself as Joe's mentor, since both shared an early interest in computer science. They commuted together to SUNY/Stony Brook to study the new science in Joe's economical Mercedes Benz diesel. John later became the car's owner during the 1970's energy crises. John was elected negotiator-at-large for almost every contract made until his retirement. Someday the college will send him a bill for the electricity his diesel motor heater consumed from Math Department offices on cold winter days. We all owe thanks

to John and Joe for what they added to the union and every contract made during the 70s and 80s.

Another of John's commuting companions, Larry Cohen (Math), was appointed by Doris to follow Bob Strain as the union representative to the three-member Grievance Board. Larry served thirteen years in that position until he was elected NCCFT Secretary in 1994 when Dorothy Cooke (Nursing) retired. Larry served as NCCFT Treasurer when Aaron succeeded Phil as President in 1999.

Crisis Committee leadership also fell to Math Department faculty. Arnold Naiman (Math), though terminally ill, was co-chair of the 1974 committee with Phil Nicholson. Bob Rosenfeld (Math) chaired this committee in 1979. No one who was there will forget Abe Weinstein's (Math Chairperson) role in setting up a roving team to protect picket lines in a near-strike situation in 1974, or in helping to organize the celebration party after a contract was made. County Executive Ralph Caso was deftly played by Bob Rosenfeld (Math) in an adorable tutu in one of Bob's most hilarious faculty show performances. John Earnest (Math) chaired or co-chaired our Crisis Committee for more than fifteen years. His organizational ability and computer savvy were a bulwark behind every negotiating team.

Abe didn't just help us staff our picket lines. While Math Chairperson, he sent us a union treasurer as well. Aaron Seligman was not well known when he decided to fill the treasurer spot vacated by Adrian Richner (Criminal Justice) in 1975. Aaron was a union teacher forged in the NYC strikes of the mid-1960's under Al Shanker's leadership. Behind his unruffled modest manner was a fellow of fierce determination and bulldog tenacity. He took on the increasingly demanding responsibility for all the accounts, bills, and balances of a complex and growing organization along with the constant regular duties and demands of a union officer and negotiator. Aaron became expert in advising faculty on retirement benefits and quietly and patiently assisted over one hundred members in making informed decisions about ending their careers at NCC. He possessed a creative logic that helped to make excellent agreements in the most difficult circumstances. Coupled with Larry Cohen's smart contract fundamentalism and his heavy-duty calculator, the Math Department added muscle to every contract negotiation. That union activism continued during the years of Doug Brown and Carmine DeSanto as Math Department chairs over the years that followed.



Many other members of the Math Department have served on union committees over the years. Faith Ripps (Fringe Benefits), Carmine DeSanto (Strike Headquarters, Negotiator at Large), Mauro Cassano (Special Events), Doug Brown (Calendar) and lots of others have made that department one of the strongholds of unionism on this campus. Our most important college scholarships are named for Joe Carlino, Jr. and administered by union leaders with the Carlino family. Men and women who know how to add things up always back a good union.

Union officers and committee chairs, members and delegates, have come from every part of our faculty and professional staff. Without their work, we'd have no organization and all of our accomplishments would quickly unravel. Most faculty serve without any compensation. The union never matched the College in awarding released time or in the making of big promises. Officer stipends are modest, committee service sometimes earns a dinner out; delegates go to conferences and meetings that are occasionally held in interesting places. Sometimes they are long frustrating meetings far from home. But none of the work is ever without value.

When Joan Sevick (English) wrote and produced her wonderful year-end shows and Paul Biersuck (Biology) provided the musical accompaniment, and Phyllis Kurland (SPS) helped with the musical arrangements, they gained only the shared joy and delight they brought to the rest of us. Joan's spirited lyrics highlighted the foibles and put a warm and charming perspective on our yearly events since 1984. Victor Abravaya (Theater) added his own special professional talents to most of those events, along with a company of faculty and staff who seemed to enjoy themselves almost as much as their audience enjoyed their antics.

The most unheralded union work must be that of our key committees. Fran Hilliard built our Political Action Committee (PAC) Legislative Breakfast into the kind of statewide important event that attracted NYSUT officials from Albany and community college leaders from NYC and Suffolk County. When Fran took on these events in 1992, they were just barely off the ground and our lobbying efforts almost unnoticed in Albany. By 1998, the NCCFT was the community college leader in bringing into focus the budgetary needs of most of the undergraduate students in the public institutions in our state. Frank Frisenda was a student at NCC when he was a Vietnam era vet in one of Phil Nicholson's

history classes. When he joined the NCC faculty a few years later he started his NCCFT work on the Political Action Committee, then became the NCCFT Treasurer before becoming its Vice President. Now he's its President. What's next Frank?

Several faculty have consistently served on the PAC in the years of its greatest activity since 1988. Neil Nugent (Marketing), Phyllis Kurland (SPS), Bernadine Brown (English), Mary Ann Povelis (Nursing), Thomas Rowland (English), Jeff Frankel (SPS), along with Frank Frisenda were among those who put our political action events together and joined officers in the often frustrating educational work of lobbying expeditions to Albany in late February and March every year. Crowded hallways and hurry-up meetings accompanied bad weather and bad food. No one who was there will easily forget the cold and wet St. Valentine's evening when every decent restaurant in Albany was fully booked and our gang had to content itself with a drafty roadside fast food emporium. For a good laugh, ask Bernadine or Fran about that memorable evening.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY AND THE NCCFT**

From the time Doris established it in the mid 1970s, no committee worked harder and with more frustration than our Health and Safety Committee. All of its chairpersons, Shirley Aronson (Engineering), George Smit (Chemistry), Agnes Kadar (Physical Science), and Doug Cody (Chemistry) had to become experts themselves. Some have enrolled in specialized industrial hygiene programs. From her studies, Agnes developed a new science course, Environmental Safety and Health (Science 209). Doug earned an advanced graduate certificate in Occupational Health and Safety from SUNY/Stony Brook and became a Board Certified Safety Professional. Shirley and George worked for over twenty years to help make our buildings safer and less contaminated with mold spores and residual bacteria. Countless meetings with private and public agencies finally drove the College to undertake massive reconstruction of inadequately insulated pipelines and badly designed buildings and to repair leaking roof tops.

Serious respiratory and immunological ailments plagued dozens of our faculty including members of this committee and most of these committee chairpersons. Poor College and County coordination of effort, funding deficiencies, indifferent public works and health agencies, and maintenance problems plagued the effort to find a decisive conclusion.

The aggressive work of the committee, the monitoring, recording, and reporting of problems was a key to every remedial step and corrective effort so far. Without this committee's constant vigilance for over thirty five years on behalf of the faculty, many more illnesses and far more serious harm would certainly have resulted from our “tight building” cluster environment. If we ever establish truly healthy air quality on our campus, the people of the NCCFT Health and Safety Committee will be responsible for it.

## **MORE UNSUNG HEROES**

While Math and History departments have enriched our union, its leaders have come from every area and department as well. Bob Karmon served (on and briefly off) for more than fifteen years, first as Secretary, then as Vice President for classroom faculty. Bob's extraordinary intelligence and sharp instincts saved the day on many occasions. Doors, tables, flower pots, even flagpoles, were unable to stand in his way when his furies rose and something important to this union was on the line. Always a staunch professional, Bob took the lead in representing the faculty when the NCCFT urged the College to begin a regular year-end colloquium program on important academic and pedagogical issues. Bob was the union figure who helped develop the successful College-For-A-Day program to advertise and promote our institution's unique qualities to the public in the late 1970s. He always sought to enlarge the public's appreciation of NCC and has worked on every college relations or public project of importance during his career. In 1998 and 1999, Bob was a leader in planning the March 1999 29th Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust & the Churches program for NCC, an internationally recognized scholarly event.

Vera Jerwick (Library) brought her own kind of fierce energy and devoted loyalty to the union and to Doris when she served as Vice President for non-classroom/professional faculty. Many others have served, and continue to serve, a term or more as officers--and at times it may have seemed to some a sentence for wrongdoing. Richard Newman (English), the current NCCFT Secretary notes that while the sense of responsibility never lets up, it brings with it a special “camaraderie” among union officers. Those bonds contribute to a mutual respect that allows for honest disagreement, sometimes real conflict, which nearly always results in the constructive resolution of problems.

There never was adequate compensation for the long hours, heated debates, frustrating and tedious negotiations. But, if you are like Vice President for non-classroom/professional faculty, then NCCFT President (2007-2009), and through his long NCC career, College Registrar, Barry Fischler, you like to be at the center of things and like to know what is really going on, and you like to play a constructive part in the action, the union has been a satisfying place to be. If you like the heat, this has been a great kitchen in which to cook.

Some of its officers added civility and humanity to the interactive processes. Dorothy Cooke finished her career at NCC with a term and a half of service as union Secretary. Her warmth and personal good cheer gave balance to tense and frustrating debates and her quiet intelligence helped make good decisions as well. With Phil, she was one of the union's hardest working lobbyists. Dottie never complained of the hectic scrambling from legislative office to office, long flights of stairs, mediocre meals, and long round trips to Albany. Phil always drove, as she was the slowest driver the union ever saw. "Move over Dottie and let me drive your car for a while," Phil (in his customary hurry) would often say to her. Barbara Horn (English) edited our Newsletter for a couple of years (undoubtedly its best) before she was elected NCCFT Secretary for a term. Some of the trees still standing around our campus are there because of her intervention to stop their unnecessary destruction during a construction project. Curly Faber (HPER), Bill Piervincenzi (Biology), Porter Kirkwood (Sociology) and others (See Appendix #1) came forward when the union needed them and served as officers. The least noted have been the hard-working members of our Executive Board who represented their departments while carrying the responsibility of setting the basic policies for the union at regular monthly meetings and at special sessions.

So many people have given their time and energy to the NCCFT that it is impossible to adequately give them all the credit they deserve. At every negotiation we elect negotiators-at-large who help to prepare the bargaining package, deliberate with the officers throughout, and endure some of the most strenuous and frustrating aspects of what the union does. It is also a most vital service that goes largely unnoticed by the membership. It is exciting and challenging work and always worth the effort. The bonds of trust and friendship that are built during the process last indefinitely. Officers of the union share this sentiment. Jim Hoyt

(SPS) served the NCCFT as an officer for fourteen years and concluded his reminiscences for this project by stating how “appreciative of the deep and enduring personal friendships that I developed with many of the members of the Executive Committee that I was honored to serve with.” Current and recent officers, Donna Hope (Classroom Vice President), Richard Newman (Secretary), Caroline Falconetti (Treasurer), and Dawn Smith (Non-Classroom Vice President) would heartily agree with Jim’s sentiments. Nothing builds bonds better than working together on a worthy cause.

When everyone was young (or so it seemed), in the first decades of the union, we picnicked on the quad together. Our children played together. There was softball, hot dogs, and soda.

At the end of each semester, we still celebrate and see old friends for lunch. In the early years, Doris Shaffer found time to bake Virginia hams, Lee Thompson (Secretary for the Academic Senate) made egg salad, Bobbi Levin (NCCFT’s first Office Manager) made buckets of ambrosia, and Ted Butler (Physical Science) put together a special punch. Phil Mark's (Chemistry) mother baked a huge cheesecake for each of our luncheons. The twice-yearly luncheons of December and May were started by the NCCFT while awaiting a faculty dining room that has yet to materialize. From time to time, we've had drawings for television sets, stereos, and baseball and hockey tickets. And since 1980, Ted Butler (Physical Science) and the late Bill Porreca (Math) co-chaired our Social Events Committee with help from Wayne Ramsey (Physical Science), Anne Brack (Nursing), Mike Steuer (Math), Neil Nugent (Accounting), and Mauro Cassano (Math). They were the ones who made sure the soda was cold, coffee was hot, balloons were inflated, wine was chilled, and that the caterers arrived in time to feed the hungry faculty who look forward to joining their colleagues for a few hours of camaraderie, and that they left the party sites as clean, or cleaner, than they were before we arrived. Today, the work is carried on by the members of the Special Events Committee, Rose Tavitian (chair), Alex Sanchioli, Virginia Sanchioli, Zia Durrani, Dorothy Rabbene, and Ricky Cappiello.

Since she arrived as a part-time clerical assistant in 1971, the union employed only Ms. Bobbi Levin to care for the myriad office details. Full-time starting in 1975, Bobbi was our Administrative Assistant, Office Manager, Counselor, Newsletter Publisher, and Computer Specialist. Through the years, she met and welcomed every new member,

answered queries from all, arranged meetings and made sure we got to them on time, hired caterers, handled all union correspondence, and, in general, was the NCCFT's link to the world beyond F 3293. She endured the tensions and conflicts that are the stock-in-trade of our organization with good-humored realism and has built honest and lasting friendships across the campus. No organization can be better than the quality of its staff. If in its first thirty years the NCCFT has achieved any greatness, Bobbi Levin has been a key component. For the last decade the office has been ably managed by the highly knowledgeable and professional Audrey Silverman. She is assisted by Eileen Izatt who has served the union for over fourteen years. Audrey's attentiveness to everything that crosses her desk or comes in by phone or e-mail is nothing short of amazing. Whoever said that the modern computer was a labor saving device doesn't know what that means for a union office, its officers, and staff. For these folks it means that the workday never ends, that messages and urgent requests must be responded to 24-7, without respite. The blog must be refreshed constantly, and planning for events, elections, and faculty requests for assistance never ends.

### **PAYING THE DUES**

In its first half century the NCCFT was the sum total of the talents and dreams of its members. That combination gave it the strength and integrity that could help it last forever. If you are reading this now but haven't yet put anything into this mixture, do yourself a favor and join in. You'll become part of an exciting and valuable future.

Philip Y. Nicholson, Ph. D.  
Professor Emeritus, NCC (ret. 2013)  
SUNY Distinguished Professor  
NCCFT President, 1987-1999

APPENDIX :

ELECTIONS/APPOINTMENTS NCCFT

1969 FACULTY SENATE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Jack Berland	Bernard Katz
Ruth Anderson	Doris Shaffer
Manny Finkel	Gene Glickman

1971 FACULTY SENATE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Bernard Katz	Doris Shaffer
Jack Berland	Aaron Schein
Gerald Pintel	Victor Margolis
Gene Glickman	Michael Corpuel
John Wood	Martha Robbins
Terry O'Dwyer	

JUNE 16, 1972 UFCT OFFICERS

President.....	Paul Devendittis
VP.....	Doris Shaffer
Secretary .....	Porter Kirkwood
Treasurer .....	Jack Berland

MAY 21, 1973 UFCT OFFICERS

President.....	Doris Shaffer
VP.....	Jack Ganson
Secretary .....	Joe Carlino
Treasurer .....	Adrian Richner

DEC. 17, 1974 NON TEACHING REP TO  
NCCFT EXEC COMM

Phyllis Kurland

MAY 12, 1975 NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Doris Shaffer  
VP.....Jack Ganson (resigned 11 9 76)  
Secretary .....Joe Carlino (died 9 77)  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

DEC. 10, 1976 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
NCCFT VP

Linda Feldman .....no majority  
Philip Nicholson .....no majority

DEC. 20, 1976 RUN OFF ELECTION FOR NCCFT VP

Philip Nicholson (to fill unexpired term of Ganson)

NOV 22, 1977 SPECIAL ELECTION FOR  
NCCFT SECRETARY

Robert Karmon (to fill unexpired term of Carlino)

MAY 4, 1978 ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Doris Shaffer  
VP.....Philip Nicholson  
Secretary .....Robert Karmon  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

SEPT 26, 1978 ELECTION OF VP  
NON CLASSROOM/PROF FACULTY

William Piervincenzi (resigned 1 21 81)

FEB 26, 1981 ELECTION OF VP  
NON CLASSROOM/PROF FACULTY

Vera Jerwick (to fill unexpired term of Piervincenzi)



MAY 6, 1981      ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Doris Shaffer  
VP.....Philip Nicholson  
VP.....Vera Jerwick  
Secretary .....Curlie Faber  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

MAY 3, 1984      ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Doris Shaffer  
VP.....Phil Nicholson  
VP.....Vera Jerwick  
Secretary .....Robert Karmon  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

MAY 1, 1987      ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Philip Nicholson  
VP.....Robert Karmon  
VP.....Barry Fischler  
Secretary .....Barbara Horn  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

MAY 2, 1990      ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Philip Nicholson  
VP.....Robert Karmon  
VP.....Barry Fischler  
Secretary .....Dorothy Cooke Mullings  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

DEC 20, 1992      SPECIAL ELECTION      SECRETARY NCCFT

Larry Cohen elected to complete Cooke term

APRIL 1993      ELECTION OF UNION OFFICERS

President.....Philip Nicholson  
VP.....Robert Karmon  
VP.....Barry Fischler  
Secretary .....Larry Cohen  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

MAY 1996 ELECTION OF UNION OFFICERS

President.....Philip Nicholson  
VP.....Robert Karmon  
VP.....Barry Fischler  
Secretary .....Larry Cohen  
Treasurer .....Aaron Seligman

MAY 1999 ELECTION OF UNION OFFICERS

President.....Aaron Seligman  
VP.....Robert Karmon  
VP.....Barry Fischler  
Secretary .....Frances Izzo  
Treasurer .....Larry Cohen

OCTOBER 2001 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
BOB KARMON, VP

VP Classroom Faculty .....Frances Izzo

OCTOBER 2001 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
FRAN IZZO, SEC.

NCCFT Secretary.....Jim Hoyt

MAY 2002 ELECTION OF UNION OFFICERS

President.....Aaron Seligman  
VP - Classroom .....Fran Hilliard  
VP - Non-Classroom.....Doug Cody  
Secretary .....Jim Hoyt  
Treasurer .....Larry Cohen

January 2004 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
AARON SELIGMAN -PRESIDENT

NCCFT PRESIDENT .....Fran Hilliard

January 2004 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
FRAN HILLIARD - VP - CLASSROOM

NCCFT - VP - CLASSROOM.....Debra DeSanto

May 2005 ELECTION OF UNION OFFICERS

President.....Fran Hilliard  
VP - Classroom .....Debra DeSanto  
VP - Non-Classroom.....Barry Fischler  
Secretary .....Jim Hoyt  
Treasurer .....Larry Cohen

September 2007 TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT OF  
PRESIDENT AND TREASURER

President.....M. Debra DeSanto  
Treasurer .....Frank Frisenda

October 2007 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
FRAN HILLIARD - PRESIDENT  
and LARRY COHEN - TREASURER (Retirees)

President.....Barry Fischler  
Treasurer .....Frank Frisenda

November 2007SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
BARRY FISCHLER - VICE PRESIDENT NON-CLASSROOM

VP - Non-Classroom.....Jim Hoyt

December 2007 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
JAMES HOYT - SECRETARY

Secretary .....Michael Anzelone

APRIL 30, 2008 ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....Barry Fischler  
VP-Classroom .....Debra DeSanto  
VP-Non Classroom .....Jim Hoyt (by run-off 5/16/08)  
Secretary .....Michael Anzelone  
Treasurer .....Frank Frisenda

June 1, 2009 ACTING PRESIDENT

Acting President.....M. Debra DeSanto

October 13, 2009 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
BARRY FISCHLER - PRESIDENT

President.....M. Debra DeSanto

October 27, 2009 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
M. DEBRA DESANTO - V/P-CLASSROOM

Vice President/Class.....Frank Frisenda

November 17, 2009 SPECIAL ELECTION TO  
REPLACE FRANK FRISENDA - TREASURER

Treasurer .....Elizabeth Wood

May 6, 2011 ELECTION OF NCCFT OFFICERS

President.....M. Debra DeSanto  
VP-Classroom .....Frank Frisenda  
VP-Non Classroom .....James Hoyt  
Secretary .....Michael Anzelone  
Treasurer.....Elizabeth Wood

October 21,2011 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
MICHAEL ANZELONE - SECRETARY

Secretary .....Faren Siminoff

October 9, 2012 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
ELIZABETH WOOD - TREASURER

Treasurer .....Caroline Falconetti

May 3, 2014 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President.....M. Debra DeSanto  
VP-Classroom .....Frank Frisenda  
V/P Non Classroom .....James Hoyt  
Secretary .....Donna Hope  
Treasurer .....Caroline Falconetti

September 1, 2015 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
JAMES HOYT -NON-CLASSROOM/PROFESSIONAL  
FACULTY VICE PRESIDENT

V/P Non-Classroom .....Dawn Smith

February 2, 2016 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
M. DEBRA DESANTO - PRESIDENT

President.....Frank Frisenda

March 8,2016 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
FRANK FRISENDA CLASSROOM VICE PRESIDENT

V/P Classroom .....Donna Hope

April 27,2016 SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPLACE  
DONNA HOPE - SECRETARY

Secretary .....Richard Newman

April 21, 2017 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President.....Frank Frisenda  
VP-Classroom .....Donna Hope  
V/P Non Classroom .....Dawn Smith  
Secretary .....Richard Newman  
Treasurer .....Caroline Falconetti

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BACK COVER