

# 2016 APA ELECTION INFORMATION

by Dennis Seybert, Elections Committee Chair

Per the APA Constitution and Bylaws, the annual APA Executive Board election shall be conducted by March 31 of each year. The 2016 election is scheduled to run from March 14 – March 29, 2016.

The 2016 election will include:

APA Executive Board

Five (5) seats on the APA Executive Board with terms ending in 2019

MEA/NEA/RA Delegate

Five (5) MEA/NEA/RA delegate positions with terms ending in 2019

This communication serves as notice of the election and the opening of candidate nominations. All nominations must be submitted via email to the chair of the APA 2016 Elections Committee, Dennis Seybert at [seybert@msu.edu](mailto:seybert@msu.edu) no later than 12:00pm (noon) on Thursday, February 22, 2016.

Individuals must be APA members in good standing to nominate or be nominated for office. After the close of nominations, properly nominated candidates will be contacted by the Elections Committee Chair to confirm their willingness to run for office.

The APA Elections Committee includes: Dennis Seybert (Chair), Cindy Helms, Danielle Flaumenhaft, Grimaldo Robles and Laura Wise.

Each year, the APA Nominations and Elections Committee works diligently to operate an efficient, accurate and transparent election in compliance with the APA Constitution and Bylaws. Election results will be done on March 29, 2016 at 5:00pm at the APA Office. This public election event is open to full members of the APA. An election results announcement will be communicated with the membership March 29, 2016.

Further announcements around the election will be provided in future APA newsletters and via the official APA ListServ. Please watch your email for important election information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dennis Seybert, at [seybert@msu.edu](mailto:seybert@msu.edu).

# UPDATE: JANUARY 2014 AND JANUARY 2015 LUMP SUM BONUS PAYMENTS

by Maury Koffman, APA President

The APA is proud to have recently received a binding ruling by an arbitrator, citing a unilateral violation of the APA contract by MSU and compelling the University to issue payment of the withheld funds from our January 2015 lump sum bonus payment as bargained for you by the APA.

## **January 2014 Lump Sum Bonus Payment**

As you may recall, the University unilaterally withheld roughly \$300 from every eligible member's January 2014 lump sum bonus payment. While the lower court ruled exclusively in favor of the APA and MSU to enforce the contract as agreed, the outside plaintiff appealed the lower court's decision and the union was waiting for a hearing in the Michigan Court of Appeals.

On February 5, 2016, the hearing on the merits of the appeal was heard in the Michigan Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals has no mandatory timeline to issue their ruling but holding the hearing is a step forward in the process.

We will continue to update members as we have more information.

## **January 2015 Lump Sum Bonus Payment**

There was no lawsuit regarding the January 2015 payment. However, MSU chose to unilaterally withhold roughly \$100 from every member's lump sum bonus payment in January 2015. Since this issue was not subject to adjudication through the court, the APA filed a grievance and certified the case to binding arbitration.

The arbitration hearing was held in late November 2015 and in January 2016 we received a positive ruling from the arbitrator compelling MSU to payout the unilaterally withheld funds from January 2015.

The APA is engaging MSU to identify the specific amount (again, roughly \$100 per full-time member of the APA who was employed on January 1, 2015) and the date payment will be issued per the order of the arbitrator. Once we have further details we will update the membership accordingly.

## **Moving Forward**

The January 2014 and January 2015 payments were the result of collective bargaining in reflection of the health care savings from 2009 – 2013 (roughly \$2,400 per member). Since those total savings were to be paid out between the January 2014 and January 2015 bonus payments there are no additional lump sum bonuses scheduled under our current contract.

It is our strong collective voice through the union and support from our state affiliate, the Michigan Education Association, that gives us the necessary resources to legally pursue full payment of the January 2014 and January 2015 lump sum bonus payments.

The arbitrator's ruling regarding the January 2015 payment affirms the University unilaterally violated our legally binding contract and the APA is proud to have successfully pursued this issue on behalf of every APA member.

# KNOW YOUR CONTRACT – BENEFITS

by Melissa Sortman, MEA Uniserv Director

This month's More You Know information session is Benefits: Health Care and Beyond. Wages and health coverage are typically the top issues for APA members, but the other benefits in a union contract can make the difference in quality working conditions and quality of life.

The Public Employment Relations Act (PERA) provides the right to bargain collectively for all wages, hours and working conditions ([www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-336-of-1947.pdf](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-act-336-of-1947.pdf)). If the members of APA were not organized in a union with the right to collectively bargain, these benefits would be up to the sole discretion of the University and could be unilaterally changed or eliminated.

Benefits typically refer to health care and supplemental benefits such as dental, vision, life insurance and long-term disability. The employer-paid benefits such as health care, dental, life and long-term disability are bargained and enforced by the collective bargaining agreement. Currently, the employee-paid benefits such as vision and optional life insurance are determined by the University. [https://hr.msu.edu/benefits/benefits\\_docs/Benefits\\_Summary.pdf](https://hr.msu.edu/benefits/benefits_docs/Benefits_Summary.pdf)

## Health Care Coverage

The health care coverage for APA members is bargained with the University. APA members that are health benefit eligible have fully-funded health coverage through December 31, 2017 currently provided by Blue Care Network (BCN) with the option to pay the premium difference between BCN and Blue Cross/Blue Shield Community Blue PPO. The unionized support staff members pay no premium for BCN, while the academic staff pay a significant portion of the premium. This is a direct result of the collective bargaining process and collaboration between the University and the Coalition of Labor Organizations (CLO). The Joint Health Care Committee (JHCC) consists of representatives of the eight support staff unions on campus and the University benefit team staff. JHCC representatives meet twice a month to work together to identify innovative health care solutions for MSU that improve quality and help constrain health care costs. The Wage and Health Care Memorandum of Understanding contains the benefit coverage: <http://www.msuapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/MOU-2014-2017.pdf>.

Best Doctors, a medical service review for medical review, find an expert doctor or get medical recommendations, is a component of the health care coverage. This service is part of ongoing efforts to improve quality and to help members make more informed decisions about your health care. It is intended to supplement, not replace, the work of your own doctor, and most doctors find that collaboration with other experts can only help in complex situations. Best Doctors service can be used for any medical condition including a review of pharmaceutical recommendations. For more information, call Best Doctors at (866) 904-0910 or go to [members.bestdoctors.com](https://members.bestdoctors.com). For the Best Doctors Welcome Kit:

[https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/benefits\\_docs/BestDoctorsKit.pdf](https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/benefits_docs/BestDoctorsKit.pdf)

## **Dental**

APA Members have fully paid dental and may choose between the Delta plan which has a greater access to a wider network and AETNA (DMO) that is a more limited network with enhanced coverage based on a co-pays instead of a premium share. You can compare the dental coverage to determine the best coverage for you and your family: <https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/dental.htm>

## **Life Insurance**

APA members have employer-paid life insurance that is equal to your base annual earnings rounded to the next higher dollar to a maximum of \$50,000. You have the option to purchase coverage to a maximum of \$2,000,000. There are additional options to purchase life insurance for your spouse/OEI and children. The life insurance coverage can be found here:

[https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/benefits\\_docs/MSULifeInsuranceBrochure.pdf](https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/benefits_docs/MSULifeInsuranceBrochure.pdf)

## **Other Contractual Benefits**

Benefits provided by your bargained contract including extended disability, long-term disability and various leave time can be found in the APA Collective Bargaining Agreement. <http://www.msuapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/APA-2015-2019-Contract.pdf>

## **Supplemental Benefits**

Additional employee-paid benefits including vision coverage can be found here: <https://www.hr.msu.edu/msubenefitsplus/>

### **Auto and Home Insurance**

As an APA member, you are eligible for group discounts through MEA Financial Services. Many members have saved a significant amount of money by getting a quote for auto and home insurance. For more information call (800) 292-1950 or visit [www.meafs.com](http://www.meafs.com) and let them know you are a MSU-APA member.

### **Member Benefit Discounts**

Another benefit of APA membership includes discounts on many daily expenses such as shopping, entertainment and services. Go to [www.mea.org/mea-advantage](http://www.mea.org/mea-advantage) to sign up!

If you have any other questions or concerns regarding benefits, contractual issue or your particular working situation, please contact the APA office at (517) 999-4004 or at [msuapa@msu.edu](mailto:msuapa@msu.edu).

# YOUR FELLOW APS

Interview by Laura Wise, APA Executive Board

Your Fellow AP in this newsletter is Andrea Worful, an Administrative Assistant at the Community Music School.

## **What is your job title?**

Administrative Assistant II, but the work that I perform at the MSU Community Music School expands far beyond what my title might describe. CMS is the outreach arm of the MSU College of Music—we bring music education and music therapy services to people of all ages and abilities from the Greater Lansing and Metro Detroit communities. I am the budget and HR coordinator for both locations. I process payroll, hiring paperwork, pay the bills and am the Fiscal Officer for all our accounts... generally I mind the Ps and Qs of the money.

## **How long have you been at MSU?**

Over 9 years. My first staff position on campus was as in the Department of Art, Art History & Design in a Clerical-Technical position. My undergraduate and graduate studies were in music so it was nice to learn more about the visual arts during the three years I worked there. I received great training and mentoring from my supervisor at AAHD and when the position at the Community Music School came open I saw the perfect opportunity to take what I had learned, expand my work and get back to my musical roots. It is the perfect fit!

## **What brought you to your job at MSU?**

I came to MSU as a graduate student in what was then the Department of Music, now the College of Music. While I was working on a Masters degree in Music Theory, I fell in love with MSU and the greater Lansing community. East Lansing felt like a second home to me even though Michigan is my adopted state. I grew up in a college town in Kentucky and always loved the excitement created by the students each year. New students taking their first steps on the journey to finding their place in the world, graduating students stepping out into full adulthood... so much life and creativity surround the campus and it's great to be a part of that. So I began looking for a job on campus. I started as a temp employee filling in while someone was on leave and I was very excited to accept a full-time, permanent position with AAHD as my temp assignment ended.

**What do you love about working at MSU and CMS specifically?**

MSU is a great place to work—you are offered the opportunities to explore new jobs or careers that best fit you and the university, all while maintaining the incredible benefits being an MSU employee affords! Working at CMS is also amazing since it brings together my passion for music and the critical thinking skills I love to exercise. CMS is such an asset to the communities we serve. Until I started working here, I didn't fully understand the breadth of programming offered—'all ages' isn't an understatement. In the past year, I helped a family register a three week old baby in one of the Early Childhood Music classes and later that semester, helped an eighty-five year old women register for piano lessons!

I think our summer camps are my favorite time of year though. When it's time for the 'RicStar' Music Therapy camp each summer, the excitement is palpable. The community comes together for two, 3-day camps—one for youth and teens, and one for adults—for people with special needs to celebrate making music in whatever ways that they can. Volunteers from the community help campers with the days' activities and siblings can come as well. It's so amazing to see everyone in the building having fun creating and communicating through music. Some of the campers that attend regular sessions at CMS will stop by the office to show us when they wear their camp t-shirts during the year. It's clear the camp experience is really meaningful and I find that being a part of that is amazing!

**What do you like to do when you are not at work?**

I spend time with my wonderful husband and two adorable young children as well as quilting and reading. I also sing and play recorder with the Renaissance Singers of Lansing and play bassoon with the Alma College Symphony Orchestra. I don't think you stop wanting to create music once you've experienced the power it can have in your life and I get to live that every day... at work and at play!

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ONE COAT AT A TIME!

by Nicole Proctor, Community Based Events Committee Chair

The 2015 APA Coat Drive was an amazing success. A warm thank you to all of the volunteers that made this possible. From the 23 plus site hosts that either put bins in their office or mail room, the APA Executive Board that sorted coats, as well as the wonderful MSU community that donated more than 600 items, the APA union has made a positive impact on our community!

MSU is a special place, filled with generous people that donated over 100 new items for the coat drive. With hats, mittens, and coats, we have done our part to help Migrant Student Services and the Lansing School District, keep students warm this winter!

Should you have an interest in participating in next year's coat drive, please contact: Nicole Proctor, Community Based Events Committee Chair at [proctorn@msu.edu](mailto:proctorn@msu.edu) or 517-353-9394.

