

## February is Black History Month

Begun in 1926 through the efforts of Black scholar and historian Carter G. Woodson, Black History Month was originally celebrated as a weeklong event. In 1976, Congress expanded the observance to the entire month of February. Visit the National Visionary Leadership Project at <http://www.visionaryproject.org/> which records, preserves, and distributes the wisdom of extraordinary African-American elders and notables who have shaped American history. The site includes videotaped interviews and multimedia lesson plans.

## Sick Days and Workers Compensation

This question recently came in from a building rep: If a teacher uses a sick day to take a class on a field trip and is injured, is that considered an on the job injury? Answer: No! If you took a sick day and are then injured on the field trip you are not covered by Workers Comp and the school system will charge you with the improper use of sick leave resulting in possible suspension or termination. Bottom line: Do not use a sick day for field trips!

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*Dan Collins with BOE President Frank Aquino at a recent meeting of the Chamber of Commerce.*

## Who is Dan Collins?

Dan Collins has been a UniServ Director for the Maryland State Teachers Association for the past twenty years, having served 12 years in Montgomery County for MCEA and the past eight years in Howard County. Prior to that Dan was a high school psychology teacher at Howard HS and Oakland Mills HS and also was the first full-time released president for HCEA and served in that capacity for nine years. He also served as the MST A vice-president for three years. Dan's current duties involve representing all HCEA Paraprofessionals in the county as well as teachers and Paraprofessionals at Cradlerock School. This involves negotiating the ESP contract as well as contract enforcement and grievance representation for this group of members. Additionally Dan is the staff liaison for several HCEA committees including the Government Relations, Constitution & Bylaws, Community Outreach and Building committee. Dan can be contacted by email at: [dcollins@mstanea.org](mailto:dcollins@mstanea.org) or by calling HCEA – 410-997-3440.

## Dates to Remember:

Call HCEA to register for events.

### I Can Do It! Strategies For Classroom Management

Saturday, February 7  
9AM – 3:30PM  
MSTA Headquarters

### Professional Development Lecture Series

Wednesday, February 11  
4:30PM – 6PM  
Wilde Lake HS

### Master of Arts in Teaching/ National Board Certification Focus Informational Meeting

Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> or  
Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>  
4:30PM – 6PM  
HCEA Office

### President's Day

February 16

### National Board Certification Informational Meeting

Thursday, February 19  
4:30PM – 5:30PM  
Faulkner Ridge

### MSTA ESP

### Professional Development Day

Saturday, February 28  
8AM – 4PM  
Maritime Institute,  
Linthicum Heights

### Read Across America Day

Monday, March 2nd

# The View from Here

by Ann De Lacy,  
HCEA President

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*“We are the blind spot that every driver has. We offer another perspective”*

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## Howard County Education Association: Who We Are and What We Do

Several months ago, I received a request from the Columbia Rotary Club to speak at a breakfast meeting. Before congratulating myself on being contacted based on my advocacy for public education and unions, I decided to ask about the topic. The “ah-ha” came when the speaker informed me that my presentation would more or less be a response to Michelle Rhee, Chancellor of D.C. Public Schools. The good news was that Ms. Rhee was scheduled to speak the week prior to my presentation and I was invited.

Hmmm...how does a public school union president respond to a person whose claim to fame is based primarily on her role in the termination of teacher tenure without sounding self-serving? Instead of attacking Ms. Rhee’s ideology, I presented on what HCEA does as an organization.

Below are some highlights that you may find beneficial:



### Who We Are

HCEA is an affiliate of the Maryland State Teachers Association and the National Education Association. In order to be a member of HCEA you must also be a member of MSTA and NEA.

We represent all certified and non-certificated employees of Howard County Public Schools who are not custodians, administrators, supervisors, or managers. We have approximately 5,000 members.

### What HCEA Does

HCEA enables members to speak with a common voice on matters affecting or pertaining to the education profession and to present the individual and common interests before the Howard County Board of Education and legislative bodies who are responsible for making policy or budget decisions affecting Howard County Public Schools.

We are the watch dog group that ensures the system is fair, free of nepotism, cronyism, favoritism, racism, ageism, and dictatorship for our members.



We are the blind spot that every driver has. We offer another perspective.

### Our Structure

Members—Rep Council—Board of Directors—HCEA Officers—HCEA President

### Why Tenure?

Tenure has removed a lot of the injustice and politics from the discipline or dismissal of teachers. In the state of Maryland, before tenure is attained, all teachers go through a two or three year probationary period where they can be non-renewed or dismissed without explanation.

#### A Myth About Tenure

*“Tenure provides bad teachers with a job for life.”*

In truth, tenured teachers can be dismissed for misconduct, incompetence, or insubordination, but only after they have been given the right to defend themselves. Many school boards would like to cut costs by replacing more highly paid, experienced teachers with those who have less experience.

Teachers are regularly observed and evaluated by administrators. If a teacher is incompetent, a competent administrator should be able to demonstrate it and take action toward improvement or dismissal. Behind every

## Who We Are..... (continued)

incompetent teacher is an incompetent administrator.

We don't want incompetent teachers in the profession because it diminishes our profession, makes us look bad, and most importantly, damages children!

### Merit Pay

We believe that any additional compensation beyond a single salary schedule must not be based on an education employee's evaluation, student performance, or attendance.

### What We Need

Students need smaller class sizes, up-to-date textbooks and computers, safe and modern buildings, qualified, caring teachers and paraprofessionals in every classroom, and actively involved parents and community. Shared responsibility and mutual respect will together produce results that will help students succeed in the future.

Do you have a new driver?  
Are you looking to buy a house?  
Are you renting?

Looking for insurance?

**Call NEA Members  
Auto & Home Insurance  
Causality Insurance  
1-800-877-7345**

**You Could save up to \$400.00.**

This is another wonderful opportunity from NEA Members Benefit brought to your attention by your Member Benefit Committee.

## Annapolis Report

With the national economy in a deep funk you might think education funding is the only issue on MSTA's lobbying agenda for 2009. But MSTA's lobbyists have their hands full researching, analyzing and discussing with lawmakers other important pieces of legislation, some perennial and some new. Some proposals would help strengthen student achievement and school employees' voices; others are bad ideas that we're working hard to stop. At press time, here are several priority issues that, for better or worse, legislators will be debating through April.

### Protecting school funding and pensions.

Last month analysts reported that as a result of the economic recession, the state's mid-year budget deficit had doubled to \$400 million, and next year's projected gap had risen to a whopping \$2 billion. As a result, the Governor and legislative leaders were considering cuts to education and other areas, as well as possibly shifting to local governments a portion of the state's pension costs for educators. MSTA's leaders and lobbyists continue to be fully engaged in discussions with state officials to prevent or minimize the impact of any cutbacks or cost shifting on students, educators and public schools.

**Passing labor legislation.** The playing field for contract negotiations in Maryland is slanted unfairly towards local school boards who can refuse to discuss critical issues that local education associations want to raise at the bargaining table. Sen. Jamie Raskin and Del. Sheila Hixson are sponsors of new legislation that creates a neutral third party to decide disagreements between education employers and your Local Association over what can and can't be negotiated, and a fair and timely process ending in binding arbitration that reduces current delays in resolving such disputes.

**Fighting vouchers in disguise.** MSTA again opposes the "BOAST" bill because it establishes a publicly funded voucher program for private schools that diverts scarce state tax dollars away from public schools. The bill provides an income tax credit for contributions made to a scholarship organization or eligible educational organization.

**Improving working conditions.** MSTA will be looking at legislative avenues to address work environment issues that affect educators' ability to perform their jobs. This includes more accurate data collection on class sizes, ways to reduce paperwork and promote better mentoring and professional development for educators and constructive solutions for addressing student discipline issues.

### Holding charter schools accountable.

MSTA supports prohibiting charter schools from seeking waivers from specified laws, requiring them to implement negotiated agreements, and requiring county boards to fund the schools in accordance with a specified formula.

To find out how you can help lobby, visit [www.mstanea.org](http://www.mstanea.org) to sign up for FrontLine.



*Howard County resident Kristen Neville with HCEA President Ann DeLacy and Delegate Steve DeBoy attend MSTA's Annual Open House on the first day of the legislative session.*

## HCEA Marketplace

### For Sale

**5-piece Girl's Bedroom Set:** Victorian Country Garden Collection of Lea Furniture Company. Like New. Retail for \$2000, asking \$1200 or best offer. Pictures can be emailed by request. Call Rich @ 410-461-3210.

### General Services

**Campers Wanted:** Visual and Performing Arts Summer Camp at Howard County Center for the Arts, Ellicott City. Grades K-8. Drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, musical theatre, Shakespeare, dance and much more. Learn from experienced teachers, create fun and exciting projects and make lifelong friends. Exhibitions and performances of student work. One- and two- week, full and half day sessions, June 22 – Aug 21. Call 410-313-ARTS [www.hocoarts.org](http://www.hocoarts.org).

**Daycare:** Licensed home daycare provider in Elkridge/Hanover available to care for your toddler. Accommodating teachers schedules. Call Karyn 410-796-0099.

**Tutorrific!** Tutor in homes throughout Howard County. A great way to make extra money! Please send an email or your resume to Deborah Peled Markowitz at [tutorrific@comcast.net](mailto:tutorrific@comcast.net).

**Electrician:** Licensed Master electrician specializing in new and old work. Recessed lighting, ceiling fans, service work and more. Call Larry 443-927-4052.

**Home Mortgage/Refinancing:** Interest rates and home prices are the lowest in years. Presidential is a Maryland based bank with offices in Columbia. No application fees or appraisal fees for HCEA members. First time home buyer programs. Contact Mitch Lax @ 443-812-9319 or by e-mail at [mitchlax@presidential.com](mailto:mitchlax@presidential.com) to discuss your mortgage options.

**Pet Portraits:** Would you like a custom one-of-a-kind portrait of your pet or the perfect gift for the pet-lover in your family? Have your favorite pet's image transformed into an extraordinary work of art. In just 3 weeks I can create a one-of-a-kind pet portrait from just a few photos and some insight from you about your pet's unique personality. If you're interested, please go to [www.paw-portraits.com](http://www.paw-portraits.com), e-mail me at [rick@paw-portraits.com](mailto:rick@paw-portraits.com) or call Rick Ragan at (412) 973-9866.

**Handyman Services:** Give your Valentine the best present of all - finish the to-do list. Don't have time to get it all done? Contact JM Frederick, LLC for handyman services. MHIC Licensed #97185, #125996. Insured, and workers comp. Residential and commercial services available. Office: 410-750-7473 or email [jm.frederick.llc@gmail.com](mailto:jm.frederick.llc@gmail.com). Servicing Howard and nearby counties. Emergency services as available.

**Public School Employees' Child Development Program:** Now enrolling for 2009-2010 at our Cedar Lane School, Long Reach High School, Oakland Mills High School, Marriotts Ridge High School and River Hill High School locations. Hours: 6:30am-6:00pm. Ages: six weeks-five years (Infants at our Cedar Lane School location.) Morning Snack, Lunch, Afternoon Snack. MSDE Approved. Curriculum MMSR Assessments Call 410-888-9040, email us at [Barbara\\_Lisle@hcps.org](mailto:Barbara_Lisle@hcps.org) or visit our website [psecdp.com](http://psecdp.com).

### Employment

**Summer Opportunity at Camp:** Camp Airy (for boys) and Camp Louise (for girls) overnight camps in nearby Thurmont and Cascade, Maryland are looking for experienced educators to supervise athletics, arts & crafts, dance, drama, outdoor adventure (climbing, ropes, orienteering, etc.), music, photo. Summer season June 16 thru August 17. Outstanding facilities and benefits. Contact Steve Goldklang ([steve@airylouise.org](mailto:steve@airylouise.org)) or Bobbie Miller ([bobbie@airylouise.org](mailto:bobbie@airylouise.org)) or call 410-466-9010.

**Beth Tfiloh Camps seeks head counselors and instructors** of campcraft, singing, nature, sports, art, and swimming. The Owings Mills day camp runs Monday-Friday from 9 AM-4 PM for 8 weeks (June 22-August 14). Visit our website at [www.btcamps.org](http://www.btcamps.org) or phone 410-517-3451. Your child attends free!

**Spend Summer in the Sun:** DRD Pool Management, Inc. is accepting resumes for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers (Full or part time.) No experience necessary. For more information, call David Watts @ 410-785-7665 or email at [dwwatts@drdpools.com](mailto:dwwatts@drdpools.com).

### Vacation Rentals

**Spring Break in OC:** Beautiful 2 BR 2 Bath OCEANFRONT Condo on 51st Street in Ocean City. Wake up on the beach. Decent April weather, no crowds. \$790 for 7 nights. Call Walt at 410-531-9508 or email: [wborys@verizon.net](mailto:wborys@verizon.net).

**Ocean City, MD:** Beautiful Condo completely renovated. 135th St., ocean block, ocean view, pool, full kitchen, balcony w/ocean view, cable TV, 1 BR, sleeps 4, HCEA discount. Just \$650(plus tax) a week. Call Beth Wilkinson @301-317-7722.

**Outer Banks, NC Condo:** For rent for the following weeks – last week in July and the first week in August. On the beach in Kill Devil Hills. Full kitchen, cable TV, phone, Jacuzzi, etc. One bedroom plus sleeper couch. Sleeps 4. Linens and towels included. \$825/week. Call Marius Ambrose @ 410-997-3440 ext. 19.

**Deep Creek Lake:** 5 BR. log cabin chalet; fully furnished; all amenities included; minutes from WISP Ski resort; 30% discount to HCEA members; weekend or weekly rental. Call Dan @ 410-465-5190.

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