

# The Sentinel

## Dream Relief Day

*Senator Dick Durbin Visits ECC's Undocumented Students*



### By Manuel Salgado

On June 15, 2012 President Obama announced an order that allows young “Dreamers” to apply for deferred action and work permits. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services office states “individuals who receive deferred action will not be placed into removal proceedings or removed from the United States for a specified period of time unless terminated.” ([www.USCIS.gov](http://www.USCIS.gov)) At ECC I have had the privilege of working closely with undocumented students and I must admit working with this population takes a unique blend of tough love and hopeful optimism; the ongoing battle as a counselor is to provide accurate information regarding the real limitations, yet not turning off (or “cooling” off) the desire and dream they have to complete their educational pursuits. I’m proud to say that I am not alone in this work. Many people at ECC care for this population and make the extra effort to assist these students. Although I can’t speak for my colleagues I can say that this has been one of the most rewarding times to be an advocate. These students energize and inspire me every day. Young undocumented students and their allies have made tremendous strides in changing the political landscape regarding the passage of the federal DREAM Act, not to be confused with the Illinois Dream Act. The federal DREAM Act will provide path to citizenship for those who qualify. ...[Continued on Page 3](#)

### Honors Program Growing

By Johanna Cummings

While many universities and colleges are observing a drop in the number of new student applications, honors programs at two-year community colleges are growing. In 2009, *The Washington Post* took note of the trend, observing that enrollment in honors programs at two-year institutions was up by 10%, with no sign of interest waning. The reasons for the surge in applications are varied; most frequently, students (many of whom have already been accepted at premier four-year institutions) say they are prompted by an economic incentive (an enormous cost savings over private institutions) and the opportunity to experience challenging coursework in smaller classes taught by dedicated faculty. Like other programs around the country, the Honors Program at ECC is growing. This fall, the Honors Program welcomed 114 new students, bringing our total number of students to 309. These students represent the brightest and most engaged students on campus. To participate in Honors, a new student must meet...[Continued on Page 7](#)

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for your support as the new ECCFA leadership team works hard to steer the ship to navigate waters that, at times, is choppy. I also want to express my appreciation to my colleagues in the leadership team for their dedication to the union and the membership.

The first four weeks of the semester have been pretty busy for all of us. I hope that we all are getting a little bit less stressed as we get into the routine of the new semester.

Among the things I mentioned at the Opening Day luncheon, the need for the ECCFA officers and Senators to do a better job at communicating with the membership is still an area that we need to improve. The more fluid the communication is between faculty and their elected representatives, the more included we all will feel. This brings a sense of participation among all of us that is essential for the unity of the association. It is important that we all feel part of it because we all are the ECCFGA.

In an effort to work towards this goal, Senators should communicate at least every other week as they provide you with their report on the biweekly Senate meeting. In addition, Senators are to have open lines of communication with their constituents so that they can gather information, ideas, suggestions, and complaints from the membership and bring those to the Senate meetings.

The list of all Senators and their respective constituents will be made available so that you know who your Senator is. As we try to make positive changes and correct some deficiencies relative to communication, I would ask you to let us know how we are doing. Your input and help are truly valued as we try to implement changes.



On another note, I recently, and by mistake, sent an email to all members asking them to vote to approve a financial donation from the ECCFA to our brothers and sisters from Lake Forrest High School in their fight for a fair contract. I apologize for adding to your already crowded Outlook inbox. It was intended for the Senate. That night, I could not stop thinking about how mad you might be at me after having received those many replies to all emails. But as bad as I felt after realizing my error, the result of that

erroneous email was a true demonstration of membership participation, democracy, and union solidarity. Thanks so very much for putting up with my blunder, but above all for showing your spirit of solidarity.

I also wanted to bring you up to date with the ECCFA Scholarship Endowment. The ECCFA funded the endowment with the minimum needed to award our first scholarship. As you may know, October will kick off the giving campaign for the ECC Foundation scholarships. Please consider donating to support an investment in our students.

Finally, a big thank-you to those of you who volunteered to serve on our various committees. It is our firm intention that those who serve come by way of volunteering or being elected by their division colleagues and are not handpicked by the ECCFA President or any other member of the leadership. There is still much work that needs to be done. We ask for your support and your patience as we try our best to tackle all these tasks in order to better our association.

Your colleague,  
**Luis Martinez**  
**ECCFA President**

**Scenes From the ECCFA Picnic--Photos by Marc Healy**



## GOOD GRIEVANCE!

**By Susan Ford**

Welcome “home”, beloved colleagues!

Now that we have our classes running like well-oiled machines, we can afford to take just a little time to take care of ourselves almost as well as we take care of our students. Maybe we need to take good care of ourselves to insure that we can continue to give our best to our students!

Step one of that self-care is to read and understand our Collective Bargaining Agreement—our contract. (I always find it a fun read!)

We all need to be fully aware of our rights, just in case an administrator inadvertently (or purposely) steps on or convolutes them. You won’t know you are being harmed in some way if you don’t know what your rights as an ECCFA member are.

For full-time faculty, Article IV includes your rights as a faculty member, Article V lists leave benefits, and Article VI covers compensation and insurance benefits—regular salary and beyond.

For unit adjunct faculty, Articles VIII and X cover all we need to know. But be sure to review the list in the first section of each article to learn what rights we share with full-time faculty. (Our equity is on the rise!)

If you believe you have been the subject of a contract violation, go directly to Article III and contact a member of the Grievance Committee. The sooner we can address a possible problem, the more efficiently it can be solved.

Of equal importance are our responsibilities as faculty members. The surest way to avoid an awkward meeting with your dean is to live up to the demands to which we have agreed. Job descriptions are probably the best delineations of our responsibilities. There are a few other sections that pertain to our responsibilities: Office Hours and Evaluation—one for FT, UA2 and UA, Academic Calendar—4.15, Instructional Area Meetings—4.18. Be certain that you are absolutely fulfilling all that is required of you every day.

Article II Provides for the way the ECCFA and the Board (college) work together. There are 2 particularly important sections there. 2.12—Resolution of Matters not covered by This Agreement states that if there is no reference in the contract about certain circumstance, it must be bargained. Section 2.13 lists Management Rights. (It is important for all of us to know what those are—or are not.)

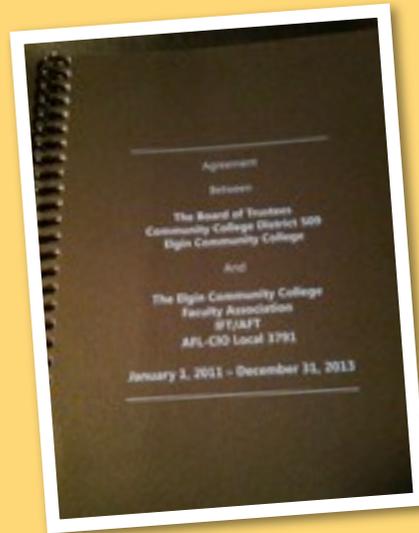
Having a good solid understanding of the basics of our contract will surely decrease the number of problems

that crop up each year—grievance and discipline. It is a good way to make certain our general working conditions and atmosphere are pleasant!

There are two more important ideas to remember:

DO

NOT



**INDIVIDUALLY BARGAIN WITH YOUR DEAN OR ANY ADMINISTRATOR OR BOARD MEMBER.**

That means we can’t make one-on-one deals for low enrolled classes or special projects—among other things. Article I states that the ECCFA is the **EXCLUSIVE** bargaining representative of the faculty. Collectively we can ensure equity, fairness, and consistency for all of our members—and it is the law. **DO NOT ATTEND A MEETING ALONE AT WHICH DISCIPLINE MAY OCCUR.** We all have Weingarten Rights which guarantee that a union rep can be with us at any such meeting.

That seems to be enough “homework” for you for the next few weeks! Enjoy getting to know your contract, and enjoy a fruitful semester with your students!

The ECCFA Grievance Committee:

Elizabeth Becker, Math, Science & Engineering

Janet Flynn, Health Professions

Susan Ford, UA2

Cindy Hutman, Communications & Behavioral Science

Fabio Martinez, Sustainability, Safety & Career Tech

Roger Ramey, Business

Howard Russo, Liberal, Visual and Performing Arts

Armando Trejo, Library/Counseling

Cassandra Watson, UA1

## VP2 CORNER

### By Marcia Luptak

Welcome to a new school year! First of all, I would like to briefly introduce myself to those of you who do not know me. My name is Marcia Luptak, and I will be serving as the ECCFA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President for this academic year. I have been teaching at ECC since 1996 and became a UAF-2 in 1999. While my primary teaching assignment is ESL in the ABEC Department, I also teach Reading and a Welding I-CAPS support course. I have been on several committees at ECC over the years and currently serve on the Faculty Development Committee as well as the Faculty Senate. As I have stated in emails, I believe in open communication between UAF-2 faculty and the Senate. My goal for this year is to try to make UAF-2 faculty feel more involved with what is going on in the ECCFA and to help UAF-2 faculty understand the contract and Faculty Handbooks.

Since becoming VP, I have received a lot of questions about Professional Development and Professional Expense available to UAFs. Since this is a big topic, I am going to have to break it down into several issues of *The Sentinel*. This issue, I will focus on Professional Development monies as this seems to be the most prevalent question. First of all, everything I describe here applies to both UAF-2s and UAF-1s. We share a handbook, so the process, rules and forms are exactly the same.

When talking about the Professional Development process, I often think of the Schoolhouse Rock video, "I'm Just a Bill." Yes, the process is that elaborate, but I will try to take it step-by-step here.

**Determine whether the project qualifies for faculty development monies and what expenses may be included in your request.** The project must fit with your current position at ECC. It can be a university course, a conference, a workshop, or some other form of training. Expenses that can be included are tuition, lodging, travel, and meals. Consumables such as books, software, and supplies cannot be included. Please reference the Handbook and Administrative Procedure 2.601 for specific details.

**Gather all documentation for the project.** Get published documents with prices for all of the items you want to include in the proposal. If you are applying before the project takes place, estimates for items are acceptable. You will need some sort of documentation for estimates for lodging and travel. A copy of the prices from the internet is acceptable. You will also need a published description of the project or a detailed itinerary. If you are asking for mileage, you will need to include a Mapquest from ECC (1700

Spartan Drive). It doesn't matter if the location is closer to your home, the mileage must be from ECC.

### **Fill out the Faculty Development Proposal Form.**

Be sure to be complete with your objectives, professional development goals, and impact. A single word or a short sentence is not enough, and your proposal will be returned for more clarification. Attach **copies** of all of your documentation for the project. Keep the originals! You will need these for the business office.

**Send the proposal form and supporting documentation to Kathy Coatney (VP of TLSD Office).** This form does **not** go to your Dean, Director, or Coordinator (or to me). Kathy will then prepare your form so that it goes to the Faculty Development Committee.

**Wait.** The proposal has to be approved by the Faculty Development Committee. The Committee only meets on specific dates (usually only every Thursday during the fall and spring semesters), so it may take some time before your proposal makes it to the committee. Please be aware of due dates. If you turn a proposal in December 10, for example, it will not come before the committee until late January.

**Open the email from Kathy Coatney regarding your proposal.** Save the attached documents. Your proposal at this point has only been approved. You will not get any reimbursement until you fill out the Travel and Tuition form sent to you by Kathy Coatney in this email.

**Fill out the Travel and Tuition Form.** The activity must be completed before you can turn this in. In order to get reimbursement, you must fill out this form and attach all of your original documentation (receipts, etc...). You must have an itemized receipt for anything you are requesting reimbursement for (lodging, parking, transportation, meals). If you are asking for mileage, another Mapquest will be needed. You must include all of your expenditures on the Travel and Tuition Form (put the date, type of expenditure, and the amount). Anything not on the form will not be reimbursed.

**Send the Travel and Tuition Form to Kathy Coatney** (do you feel the "I'm just a bill theme yet?). Kathy will check the form for any problems. If everything looks as it should, she will forward it to the Business Office.

**Wait.** It should take about 2-3 weeks for the reimbursement process to be completed.

Hopefully, this clarifies the process for all of you. The forms and the Faculty Development Handbook are onenet under Committees-Faculty Development. Please take time to look these over. If you have any questions about Faculty Development, Professional Expense, or the contract, please feel free to contact me, [mluptak@elgin.edu](mailto:mluptak@elgin.edu). Have a great semester!

## LEARNING COMMUNITY WINS PARTNERS IN PEACE AWARD



**Members of the Spartan Consulting Learning Community that is a recipient of the Elgin Community Crisis Center's Partners in Peace Award.**

### By Colleen Stribling

On behalf of the Spartan Consulting Learning Community, Alison Douglas and John Karnatz will be accepting the Elgin Community Crisis Center's Partners in Peace Award at a ceremony in

October. The award is presented to individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions towards the mission of the Crisis Center in Elgin.

The Crisis Center was a Spartan Consulting Learning Community client during fall, 2011 and spring, 2012. During that time, Student Partners helped the Crisis Center with projects that addressed a range of issues that included email marketing strategies, volunteer recruitment methods, fundraising event execution and business planning for the Center's resale shop. Spartan Consulting is a Learning Community class that partners Speech Communications 101 with English 101 in the fall and English 102 in the spring. The course serves many purposes. It demonstrates the synergy of Learning Communities, illustrates the power of Service Learning and enables students to

support important community efforts while learning about English, Speech Communications and real life. The goal of pairing classes in Learning Communities is to increase student retention, engagement and success. Kellie, a current Spartan Consulting student partner, expressed her enthusiasm for the project, "[When] I was introduced to Spartan Consulting ... It really seemed to grab my attention. I actually went home that day and called my mom excited about all the information that was thrown my way. I thought it was the coolest thing that I'd be working with the same people Tuesday, Thursday, Friday... and on top of that, we'd be working hands on with an actual client." Communities can also help students make the connection between the classroom and the "real-world". According to Mike, a student partner this fall, "Spartan Consulting is a practical way to learn how to apply what you learn in school into the real world. Being able to do this will help to bring things full circle and connect them to a real life application so that you will not forget the information." Congratulations to all the participants of Spartan Consulting. It is yet another example of what is possible when students become a part of a great community college.

**DREAM RELIEF CONTINUED...**

and give them access to federal financial aid. (<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/issues/DREAM-Act>) This legislation continues to be stalled in congress. However, youth around our nation have been mobilizing efforts to bring awareness, put a face to this issue, share stories, and lobby for the DREAM Act. Illinois is at the forefront, and youth in Illinois have been instrumental in changing the political climate. They went from hiding in the shadows and being silent to becoming outspoken and advocating for themselves. Some of our ECC students have been part of this effort; some are doing it through individual accomplishments and some through speaking out and sharing their own stories. Although most advocacy efforts have been calling for the passage of the DREAM Act, other “temporary” and “smaller” measures have been introduced. Most recently a presidential order or memo giving qualified youth deferred action and work permits. In the grand political scheme this is only a small temporary and tentative gesture by the government, however youth around the nation have cautious optimism and celebrate this small gesture. At ECC we have many prospective, current, and graduate students who not only benefit from this change in policy but also see this as an opportunity to change the trajectory of their lives. On June 15 when this announcement took place a student, Martha, an ECC graduate, who is one

semester away from completing her Bachelors degree called me in tears; she could not believe that for the first time in her life she was going to be able to find legal employment and make her education count. This is a student who a few months before was considering one of three options, 1. Leaving the country and moving to a country where immigration laws were not so restrictive that she could attain citizenship and begin her career of choice (i.e. Canada); 2. Going back to her native country (Mexico) where she remembers very little and would have to start over again; or 3. Find work through illegal means and be over qualified and underpaid. Although, this change in policy is tenuous due to the temporary limitation of two years, undocumented students and allies are hopeful that this signals a new direction in policy and soon they will be able to attain a path to citizenship where they can finally achieve their own version of the American dream. On August 15 Linda Campos-Moreira and I joined the Organization of Latin American Students (OLAS) and about 15 students at Navy Pier where applications and legal assistance was going to be available. As you may or may not have heard thousands of people attended, some estimates indicate over 7,000 people. ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/15/dream-relief-day-at-navy-pier\\_1778671.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/15/dream-relief-day-at-navy-pier_1778671.html)) OLAS planning appeared to be on target by leaving ECC at 7am and arriving at Navy Pier at about 8:30am, but to our amazement 8:30 was about 5 hours

too late. Some people slept at Navy Pier and others arrived hours before dawn. By the time we arrived the back of the line was stretching as far as lower Wacker drive. Unfortunately, we had to return to Elgin without the opportunity to gain assistance with the application. However, the students who took the trip did not feel that this day was a waste; they appreciated the immensity of this historic event and felt inspired to continue their own journey in attaining legal employment. Politically we understand that this is a superficial gesture to lure or sustain the Latino electorate; the timing is obvious. Politics aside, though, this has a tremendous life altering consequence for a lot of youth. In the past week I have talked to three students who their main reason of coming to ECC is this new opportunity. They tell me that education had become hopeless because the prospect of finding legal employment was very elusive. On the other spectrum, for those ambitious, dedicated, and hardworking students who in spite of the bleak prospects remained steadfast in their pursuit of a college education this is a huge victory. Let’s celebrate with these hard working students and help keep the administration accountable to their promise. At ECC we do our best to serve all students with dignity and respect and I hope you can continue your role in supporting these students as they pursue their educational goals.

**HONORS CONTINUED...**

two of following three criteria for admission:

- 3.5 high school GPA (on a 4.0 scale)
- ACT score of 25 or higher/SAT of 1710 or higher



- Graduated in the top 20%

Our Honors courses provide challenging curriculum for students, and to remain in good standing, students must maintain a 3.25 college GPA. We also offer an added incentive: students who earn an A or B in an Honors class earn a tuition waiver for their next Honors class. Waivers

can be earned for up to five classes or fifteen hours of tuition-waived credit.

To safeguard the quality of the class, only students enrolled in the Honors Program can register for classes with the Honors designation.\* This ensures the content and pace of the class will be geared toward high achievers. Honors classes are also smaller than regular classes to provide more opportunities for seminar-style conversation and debate. Finally, students in the Honors Program experience all the benefits of Honors education: assignments and activities that require rigorous research and communication skills; a focus interdisciplinary inquiry (making connections across disciplines); service to the college and community; and reflection on how diverse perspectives affect the local and global community. To support these experiences, the Honors Program at ECC provides

funding for Honors classes to participate in extracurricular and service activities that complement in-class instruction. Students visit museums, attend plays and lectures, and participate in the activities the Honors Program sponsors, like this fall's Pizza with the Professor, which will be hosted in collaboration with the Socrates Café, on

**BECKER ELECTED HAPS TREASURER**

Elizabeth Becker was re-elected the Treasurer for the Human Anatomy and Physiology Society (HAPS). This international organization is composed of 1700 anatomy and physiology instructors, most of whom are in the United States and Canada. Becker has previously served on the Board of Directors as the Central Regional Representative. As Treasurer, Becker is also part of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Becker has been a member of HAPS for 20 years.

**RETENTION ALERT! RETENTION ALERT!****By Catherine Moushon**

Want to reach out to students who are having difficulty in your classes, life issues that are distracting them from college work, or who need encouragement to seek support services?

As easy as 1, 2, 3 – click here:

[Download instructions](#) --faculty members can quickly generate a letter that is personalized and mailed to the student's home address. It is a fully automated fill-in-the-blank form. The letter describes the particular issue and encourages the student to discuss the issue with the professor as well as extending a list of student support services. If the student is identified with a particular population, such as athletic team sports, TRIO, or Tech Prep, the Retention Alert will also be copied to a case manager who may choose to follow up with the student regarding their program as well. Students not included in special populations will be assigned to a general case manager. Faculty suggested, and will be pleased to know that improvements are underway for communication between case managers and faculty.

ECC is committed to several student success initiatives, but this is one of the quickest and easiest tools for all faculty and all classes. Using the Retention Alert tool is voluntary but highly encouraged. There were nearly 700 referrals in Fall 2010!

Testimony: "My student missed the first 3 classes and did not respond to their student e-mail. In 30 seconds I was able to generate a Retention Alert letter regarding their attendance issue, the student received the letter and contacted me. This student, who had a personal crisis, was able to work on the issue and find ECC support services to help them." ~Catherine Moushon

"It was nice to know that someone cared." ~Student

You have *seen* the Retention Alert link, but have you *noticed* it? It is on the Faculty Menu of AccessECC, on the same page that you visit to see a roster or submit grades.

**NEW SHORTCUT:** By faculty request! Class Roster now has a Retention Alert Link on the bottom of each individual student profile page. Select the student name from your roster, the link is on the bottom left.

Faculty may wish to inform students by including an explanation in their syllabi:

**Sample Syllabus Insert (voluntary):**

This class will be participating in the "Early Alert" program at Elgin Community College. The "Early Alert" program is designed to promote Student Success. If I notice that you are experiencing difficulties early in the semester (Low test scores, lack of participation or poor attendance, for example), I may mail a notification to you through the "Early Alert" program.

My letter will express my concern and will request that you meet with me to address any difficulties you are having in my course through an action plan that might involve other campus or community services in the area.

Questions? Suggestions? [earlyalert@elgin.edu](mailto:earlyalert@elgin.edu) or contact members of your Retention Committee: Elizabeth Roeger, Vany Wells, John Coffin, Patty Jachowicz, Catherine Moushon, Abraham Martinez-Cruz, Tammy Ray, Ron Konwalczyk, James Dittus.



**Liz Remitz, daughter of Roxanne Bell, walks the picket line during the recent Chicago Teachers Union strike. Remitz, who is a K through 5 Spanish teacher had only been teaching for three days before the teachers went out. A tentative agreement was reached between the teachers union and CPS on September 15.**

## Constitutional Amendment on the Ballot November 6

BY JANE LEHMANN

For years, public employees have been comforted by the fact that their pension benefits are protected by the Illinois Constitution. Specifically:

### **Article XIII, Section 5. Pension and Retirement Rights**

Membership in any pension or retirement system of the State, any unit of local government or school district, or any agency or instrumentality thereof, shall be an enforceable contractual relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired. (Source: Illinois Constitution)

BUT, if the proposed Constitutional Amendment that will be on the ballot November 6, 2012 is approved by the voters, the protections afforded by Section 5 will be seriously impaired. ***SUAA will be working hard to defeat the proposed Constitutional Amendment in November.***

### ***A little history.....***

House Joint Resolution Constitutional Amendment 49, also known as CA 49, was introduced in the House of Representatives by House Speaker Michael Madigan (D-22) on April 9, 2012. Other House sponsors were Andre' M.

Thapedi (D-32), and Fred Crespo (D-44). Senate Sponsors were John Cullerton (D-6), Iris Martinez (D-20, and Jeffrey Schoenberg (D-9). It was adopted by both Houses on May 3, 2012. The House approved it with 113 "Yeas" and no "Nays." The Senate approved it with 51 "Yeas" and 2 "Nays." Voting against were Senator Michael Frerichs (D-52) from Champaign/Urbana and Senator Mike Jacobs (D-36) from Moline.

### ***What is CA49?***

I've included a link below to a synopsis of this proposed amendment, but an even shorter version of CA49 is it requires a 3/5 vote of the General Assembly if that body were to pass a bill other than for appropriations that would "provide a benefit increase under any pension or retirement system of the State. . . .

" (Source: Bill Synopsis, <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=00049&GAID=11&GA=97&DocTypeID=HJRCA&LegID=67098&SessionID=84>)

In addition, it requires a 3/5 vote of any local governing body or school district if they were to provide an "emolument increase to an official or employee that has the effect of increasing the amount of the pension or annuity that an official or employee

could receive as a member of a pension or retirement system. . . . "(Synopsis).

An increase in salary will not constitute a "benefit increase," but after that it gets murky. According to the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, questions asked during the House Hearings on CA49 highlight the ambiguity of this Amendment: That hearing considered whether incentives for employees to obtain a higher education degree would constitute a benefit increase, since once an employee completed a graduate degree his or her salary would increase. When asked if that situation would trigger the 3/5 requirement, Speaker Madigan's legal counsel responded that it would not be possible to know without seeing an employee's actual contract or collective bargaining agreement. Such a response indicates the complexity and potential legal issues that would flow from [CA49]. . . . (Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, "Issue Brief HJRCA 49: A Constitutional Amendment Regarding the Rules Governing Pension Benefit Increases") [http://www.ctbaonline.org/New\\_Folder/Pension/Issue%20Brief%20June%202012%20HJRCA0049\\_Revised.pdf](http://www.ctbaonline.org/New_Folder/Pension/Issue%20Brief%20June%202012%20HJRCA0049_Revised.pdf)

**Continued on Page 10...**

## ...AMENDMENT CONTINUED

### *Should this Constitutional Amendment be approved by the voters? SUAA says, “No.”*

Voters will receive, courtesy of the Secretary of State, information that will include arguments both for and against approving this amendment.

Apparently, the best arguments that could be found in favor are these:

Help prevent unfunded future liability for pension benefits;  
Provide better accountability;  
Require greater consensus among parties.

Those arguments should be rejected: First, requiring a 3/5 vote for any pension benefit increase is unrelated to the unfunded liability and any possible future growth in that unfunded liability. The unfunded liability is not the result of out-of-control benefits; rather, it is the result of the General Assembly simply not paying into the various pension funds what they were obligated to pay. Requiring a 3/5 vote of the General Assembly and other governing bodies in order to increase pension benefits does not force the General Assembly to pay what they owe, nor does it prevent them from failing to pay in the future.

Second, requiring a 3/5 vote on any future pension benefit increases does not ensure that lawmakers will be more “accountable.” If lawmakers were concerned that they needed outside help (i.e., a Constitutional Amendment) in order to be held “accountable,” why didn’t they pass a bill that would require them to pay the pension systems what they owe them? If they want to be held accountable, they might have considered passing a Constitutional Amendment that requires them to do what they are required to do.

Third, if what we want is “greater “consensus among parties, we don’t need to require a 3/5 vote. At the moment, neither party, alone, can pass a bill with a simple majority. It takes consensus now to pass anything. One could argue that we don’t need “greater” consensus; we simply need consensus.

Fourth, a dedicated minority on local boards can block approval of benefit and salary increases reached by good-faith negotiations.

Finally, this amendment, if approved, will NOT result in any savings to taxpayers,

will do NOTHING to address the State’s financial crisis, will scare away public employees, affecting future hiring and retention, And because it is ambiguous, confusing, and complex, could result in litigation over everything—litigation the State of Illinois can ill afford.

### *The Trojan Horse*

Please don’t be fooled by the arguments that say we need this amendment to prevent future unfunded liabilities, achieve greater accountability from elected officials, and to push lawmakers toward greater consensus. Those arguments distract you from Paragraph (d), which is the Trojan Horse: (d) Nothing in this Section shall prevent the passage or adoption of any law ordinance, resolution, rule, policy, or practice that further restricts the ability to provide a “benefit increase”, “emolument increase”, or “beneficial determination” as those terms are used under this Section.”

In the opinions of the SUAA lobbyists, Dick Lockhart and John Carr (Mr. Carr is also an attorney), if this Constitutional Amendment is approved,

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**...AMENDMENT CONTINUED**

it will make it much more difficult, if not impossible, to ever improve the pension benefits for Tier II employees; paragraph (d) could allow all kinds of negative pension legislation to be passed because such legislation would no longer be unconstitutional; It could remove any protections our pension benefits derive from the Constitution. For example, it could put Tier I employees' pension "COLA" in jeopardy. (Actually, retirees do not receive a COLA. Retirees receive an annual increase that is not tied to a cost of living index. It is 3%, compounded. That annual increase could be in jeopardy.) Professor of Law, Ann Lousin, of John Marshall Law School, and the author of *The Illinois Constitution, A Reference Guide*, and a top staff person at the Constitutional Convention concurs with our lobbyists. She

says, "I fear your lobbyist is correct. At the very least, there will be litigation over everything regarding pensions and changes to pension laws. The Amendment is, in short, a disaster from every point of view."

***What does the ballot look like?***  
This Constitutional Amendment proposes to amend Section 5 of Article XIII by adding Section 5.1. Section 5.1 is what the legislators approved and what we're referring to as CA49. ***The addition of Section 5.1 to Section 5 could effectively negate the protections previously afforded by Section 5.***

The ballot will appear as below:  
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YES For the proposed addition  
----- Of Section 5.1 to  
Article XIII  
NO of the Illinois Constitution

***What can you do?***

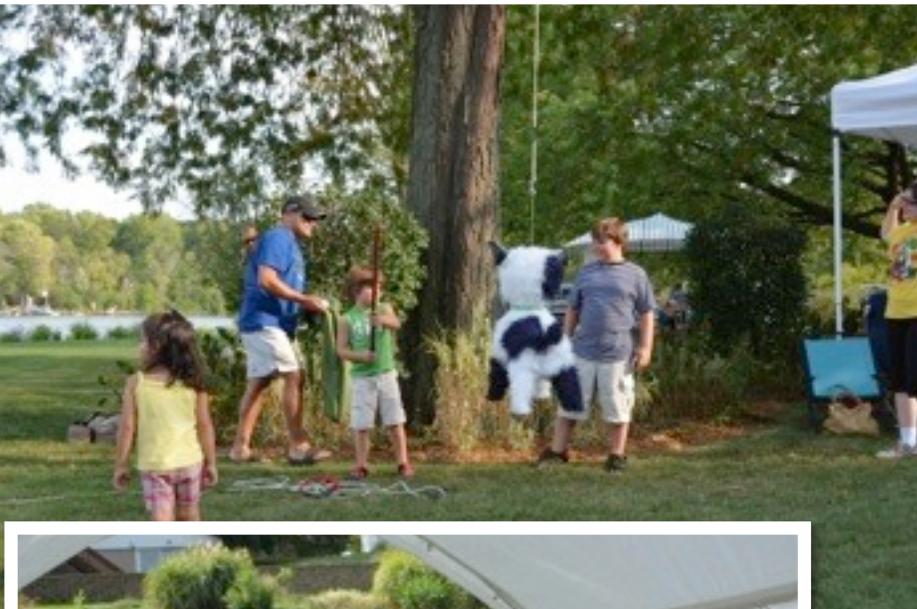
Become knowledgeable about this proposed Amendment, so you are able to talk to your friends and family about it. Below is a link to the complete bill that includes both the arguments for and arguments against that the Secretary of State's Office will distribute to votes. <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/97/HJR/PDF/09700HJ0093lv.pdf>  
If you're not registered to vote, get registered.  
Contribute to organizations that will be working to defeat this Amendment. SUAA will be working to defeat this Amendment.  
Vote on November 6, 2012

**Scenes From the ECCFA Picnic-- Photos by Marc Healy**





**Scenes From  
the ECCFA  
Picnic--Photos  
by Marc Healy**



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**2012-2013 ECCFA**

**Senators**

**LVPA**

Joel Peck  
Howard Russo

**BUS**

Linda Hefferin

**HP**

Michele Brynelsen  
Kim Tarver

**MSE**

Mary O'Sullivan  
Miroslav Rezac

**CABS**

Glenn Turner  
Cindy Hutman  
Pat O'Brien  
Lori Clark

**LRC/CON**

Armando Trejo

**SSCT**

Gary Norden  
David Reich

**UAF Senators**

Rick Bonnom  
Dan Kocher  
David Lawrence  
Marica Luptak  
Loretta McCallister  
John Mravik  
Chad Pearion  
Joyce Ross  
Julie Roth  
Cathy Tomasik

**Sentinel Calendar**

**October 15**

Deadline--October 11

**November 12**

Deadline--November 8

**December 10**

Deadline--December 6

**Just a Buck!**

**ECCFA SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS**

If every faculty member at ECC donated just \$1 per paycheck, we would be able to raise more than \$10,000 a year to contribute to the



ECCFA Student Scholarships.

As we approach October and the Foundation's

Employee Giving Campaign, please consider a \$1 or \$5 or \$100 contribution to this important scholarship.

For more information, contact your ECCFA Senator.

**2012 Senate Meetings**

**September 19--C120**

**October 3--C120**

**October 17--C120**

**October 31--C120**

**November 14--C120**

**November 28--C120**

**December 12--C120**

