



Looking forward

Whatever we are facing in 2021, we are facing it together, p. 3.



MLK Day 2021

A largely virtual program, there are a lot of opportunities to participate, p. 5.



Congrats!

Congratulations to Erin Millikan, the 2020 winner of the Gliozzo award, p. 7.



CT news

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University

December 2020 / January 2021



Oct. 28, 2020 — Wearing masks, social distancing, and standing outside on a brisk fall evening, election winners took the oath of office administered by Elections Committee Chairperson Brenda Bailey: left to right, Audit Committee Members Andrea Rafferty (3 years) and Bill Kelly (2 years), Directors Shirley VanDorp and Kristen Rule, Secretary Michelle Jenkins, and Director Janet Hershberger. Vice President Rosie Garcia and Director Jeremy Warmels were unavailable for the photo.

Our union finds a way

Meeting on zoom, voting online, administering the oath of office in our parking lot—our union continues our commitment to democracy while at the same time working to keep everyone safe during the pandemic. Here are some of our activities over last couple months.

We held an election

On October 28, we once again held our Membership Meeting in the parking lot, where the winners of the CTU online elections were announced:

Vice President Rosie Garcia,
369 votes

Secretary Michelle Jenkins, 367
Directors

Jeremy Warmels, 275

Kristen Rule, 263

Shirley VanDorp, 262

Janet Hershberger, 232

The candidates listed above will join Deb Bittner, Tracy Rich, Carmen Elliott, Andrea Parker, and Jan Wallace on the Executive Board.

With 183 votes, Stephen Stofflet lost his bid to continue serving as director. We are happy to know that he plans to continue taking an active role in the union. For example, he has agreed to
Election continued on p. 4



Nov. 17, 2020—Vice president Rosie Garcia and new Director Jeremy Warmels take the oath of office during the Executive Board meeting via zoom.

CT news

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union
of Michigan State University

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Organized and
independent
since 1974!

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Editorial Policy:

The CT News is the voice of our union. It is our vehicle for communicating, on a regular basis, the issues that confront us as workers. Through this newsletter we explain union policies, show how dues are spent, and explain the views and actions of the elected leadership for evaluation by the members.

The CT News is the voice of the membership. We welcome articles from members and stories about members.

While contributions are welcome, they should be constructive and contribute positively to the welfare of our union.

We will accept no attacks on any union leader or member. We will accept thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letters section, and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the union and its policies.

Direct ideas, letters, questions and comments to Cherylee Finney.

CTU announces new committee members and meeting dates

The Executive Board constituted its 2021 committees at its Nov. 17 meeting.

Finance: Treasurer Tracy Rich, chairperson. Directors Michelle Jenkins, Andrea Parker, Kristen Rule, and Jeremy Warmels.

Grievance, Appeal and Trial: Vice President Rosie Garcia, chairperson. Directors Carmen Elliott, Janet Hershberger, Shirley VanDorp, and Jan Wallace.

Personnel: President Deb Bittner, chairperson. Garcia, Rich, Wallace.

Membership Meetings. Due to complications that may arise due to the pandemic and vaccine availability, the schedule for 2021 Membership Meetings is tentative. Some meetings may be virtual and locations may be announced closer to the time of each meeting. Tentative schedule:

Tuesday, January 26

Tuesday, April 27

Thursday, July 15

Wednesday, October 27

CTclassifieds

Services:

▼ **Experienced Sewing Service** (Alterations and original projects): I have been sewing professionally for 30 years and would love to help you out during this crazy pandemic while we all have time to think about what needs to get done around our homes. If you have pants that need to be hemmed, curtains, or pillows that you want custom made; wedding, bridesmaid alterations, clothing

alterations, I can do it for you. I am reasonably priced, and I love to sew. Please text me and let me know what kind of project you need done and then we can set up a time to safely talk/or meet and figure out your project to be sewn. 517-648-5882, Monday–Friday 9 to 5 p.m.

▼ **Quality Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners.** Most of us are spending a lot more time at home these days, and our furniture and carpets are getting an unexpected workout! For a fresh and sanitized home, call us to help with your cleaning needs. We take every precaution to ensure your safety. Owner operated, free phone estimates. Give Quality Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners a call today at 517-694-0497.

▼ **Skills assessment software:** Make an appointment with your union (355-1903) to access the same skills assessment software used for HR's skills evaluations. Free and in an isolated location.

▼ **CTU Conference Room:** Available free to members (with deposit). For non-members, \$25/hour (plus deposit). We can discuss safety precautions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Contact the CTU office at 355-1903 for questions, reservations, etc.

▼ **Advertise** to your colleagues in the *CT News*. Send the ad copy to Cheryl@ctumsu.org. See the guidelines at www.ctumsu.org/news/ct-classifieds.

Membership Meetings

The schedule for 2021: Tuesday, January 26; Tuesday, April 27; Thursday, July 15; and Wednesday, October 27. Meetings start at 5:20 p.m., but socializing starts at 5 p.m. so check in early. COVID-19 developments do not allow us to formalize a location for meetings and may necessitate scheduling changes. Membership Meetings are for making decisions about the Union, asking questions and receiving updates about Union activities.

Executive Board Meetings

Board meetings are regularly held twice a month on first and third Tuesdays, but changes in dates and times may occur. Call about attending.

Members welcome!

The year ahead . . .

President Deb Bittner

By Deb Bittner

The year 2020 has been . . . *interesting!* Sometimes boring if you were stuck at home. Sometimes scary with stress and worry. Sometimes just plain tedious! With all of us constantly trying to figure out what is really happening and how best to respond, it made the days tense to say the least. Some of us got it right. Some of us got it wrong. And that seems to happen every day!

Stuff the library

MSU is sponsoring an MLK Day Stuff the Library Book Drive to get racially and culturally diverse books into the hands of school aged children.

You can shop from a wish list, donate a book that fits the theme, or donate money to purchase books. Go to <https://worklife.msu.edu/stuff-library-book-drive-mlk> for more information.

The books will be donated to K-12 school libraries.

Instead of (or in addition to) a donation, you can volunteer to read a book from the wish list, OR for longer books, read, review and recommend a book for older children via video.

For questions, please contact Jaimie Hutchison, hutchj@msu.edu, or KC Keyton, keytonkr@msu.edu.



2020 is so over but the challenges remain

I'm not going to use my column to try to figure out 2020. However, I would like to thank all of the members who supported CTU under some very difficult circumstances. Members are working from home and the work site, each with its own set of challenges. Some of us have had our hours cut while others have difficulty getting approval for time off. Some of us are on furlough. Some of us have been on furlough since near the beginning of the pandemic and we are desperate for political leaders to extend unemployment benefits. And some of us got sick.

To cope with all of that, we are working on several issues at this time. For example, we are struggling to get the university to acknowledge the importance of our health care CTs and allow them to access government programs that provide financial assistance to workers who must stay home because of exposure or a positive test for COVID-19.

Some positive news

As you can read in one of the other articles, CTU has done a tremendous job of adapting to our "new normal" this year. We had a great response to our first online ballots and a good turnout at our "parking lot" meetings. We are still working on how to do a membership meeting over zoom while staying in-line with our constitution, a complicated but do-able challenge. We are also planning other creative ways to keep our spirits up like more raffles and zoom district meetings and town halls. The CTU office has been able to continue operating and CTs have not forgotten to keep their union apprised of workplace issues and developments. The comments from members, even those experiencing difficulties, have been positive and encouraging.



The CTU has also been able to work with management to protect CTs' jobs and benefits while giving the university the flexibility it needs. I want to believe that we have fostered a mutual respect between MSU administrators and organized labor on campus. We all want MSU to succeed so this is important work for both sides!

Fighting for health care

And we are going to need all of the solidarity and good will we can get as we face the coming year.

Health care negotiations are underway. We have had only the "meet and greet" with MSU management and the other seven unions that are bargaining health care. (I, for one, am not looking forward to doing this on zoom.) Expect to hear more about this in the coming months. [Janelle Curtis]

Working in coalition with the other unions

This year has brought challenging issues that affected all employees. CTU has worked hard to understand the pressures placed on the other unions and helped work toward a solution that benefits all of our groups. It is rewarding to know that there is respect and mutual support among labor on campus. We know that there is strength in numbers and a united labor front. Working closely together, we can share our resources. We establish solidarity and gain insight into the struggles of the other unions on campus. Sometimes we even get a heads up on what might be coming our way.

And, with the support and solidarity

2021 continued on p. 5

Elections

continued from p. 1

remain our liaison to the President's Advisory Committee on Disability Issues where he serves as chair.

We also elected two members to the **Audit Committee:**

Bill Kelly, two-year term, 350

Andrea Rafferty, one-year term, 359

Because there was not a quorum, the Executive Board called a meeting to accept the results of the election.

We also discussed the impact of the pandemic on our lives, especially our working situations. Contract Administrator Sean Temple presented members with the many resources available to assist us at this time. Please refer to our website at ctumsu.org for more information. Look under COVID-19.

With temperatures in the mid 40s and dropping quickly, the meeting did not last long.

Door prize winners: Crissy Hodges-Chakrani won \$50; Kristen Rule won a Fall bouquet; Mary Mroz, Louis Villafranca, and Luke Zehr each won a bowl from the Lanbsing Foodbank; Jamie Archer, Michelle Jenkins, Joni Tucker, and Mary Firdawsi won CTU promotional items.

Members met to fix financial issue

After our September 30 special outdoor Membership Meeting was postponed due to a bad storm, 54 members showed up on October 7 to address a pressing financial matter. At that time, members unanimously approved a transfer of \$85,897.77 from the contingency fund to operations in order to cover this year's unexpected COVID-19 and furlough negotiating expenses as well as ongoing special projects. The vote was only to cover the actual expenses and did not address future costs.

Door prize winners: Judy Allen won the \$100 quorum prize; April Moore won \$50; Crissy Hodges-Chakrani, Shirley VanDorp, Adrian James, and Jean Leopard won CTU promotional items.



October 28, 2020—Above: Members stay bundled up for the Fall Membership Meeting. Temperatures were in the mid to low 40s.

Right: Contract Administrator Sean Temple reports on resources available to help us cope with all kinds of issues.



Furloughs were extended

In an electronic vote that ended November 23, members agreed 541 to 6 to extend the temporary unpaid furlough option through June 30, 2021.

Furloughs give MSU departments and units the flexibility to respond to the decreasing workloads and funding they might be experiencing because of the pandemic.

Most of us prefer temporary unpaid furloughs to permanent layoffs because they extend health care coverage and many benefits. Furloughs also provide a process for CTs to return to their jobs without triggering the bypass procedure and other layoff protections of our contract.

If someone does receive a layoff notice while on furlough, however, all of the layoff protections go into play.

The second vote on the November ballot was to extend the membership of CTs who are not paying dues because they are not receiving a paycheck due to being furloughed. Members voted 541 to 1 to allow furloughed members to remain members in good standing, meaning they can vote and participate in union activities.

We are staying connected in the pandemic

"We are all thrilled to hear that vaccines are becoming available," said President Bittner, "but we know that this is not the time to let down our guard."

On the other hand, she said "our union constitution mandates that we hold four Membership Meetings a year, one in January. Because a parking lot meeting in January is not feasible, we have explored alternatives, and the best option seems to be to hold a meeting on zoom."

"If we have a lot of members attending, it might be hard to have the kind of interactive conversations we usually have at meetings. But we need to protect everyone's health so we're going to make this work."

One small event that made us smile recently was a "CTU Holiday Cheer Raffle" held in early December that

Solidarity continued on p. 8

Good trouble:

Reclaiming Our Democracy, Demanding Social Justice

MSU will celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a week-long series of events starting January 17.

CTU Director Shirley VanDorp is representing CTU on the 2020-2021 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Planning Team. The team is organizing a broad range of activities while taking the threat posed by the pandemic into account. Many of this year's programs are still in development and are expected to be largely virtual. For details, check the events link on the website of MSU's Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (<https://inclusion.msu.edu>). [Michelle Granzow]

Several of the events may be of interest to CTs.

For example, the week's celebration will kick off with a jazz concert at both 3 and 5 p.m. on Sunday, January 17.

Instead of the Community Dinner, staff, students, faculty, and our families

are invited to join in a virtual program: "Building Community and Celebrating Student Success" on Monday, January 18, at 3 p.m. Michigan Representative Sarah Anthony will be the speaker.

The Administrative Professionals Association is presenting an anti-bias workshop, "Dr. King's Legacy and the Labor Movement: Moving Dr. King's Message Forward," on Thursday, January 21, from noon until 2 p.m.

Be sure to check the events website to find something of interest to you, register for events, and get the details.

This year's theme, "Reclaiming our Democracy, Demanding Social Justice," honors Rep. John Lewis (GA), who said, "Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and redeem the soul of America."

A civil rights activist, Lewis brought his commitment to fairness and equality to the U.S. House, where he served for 33 years until his death earlier this year.



Representative Lewis was a friend of labor. He defended working people and collective bargaining rights. He advocated for decent pay, including a higher minimum wage, and he supported improvements in workplace health and safety.

The CTU has a letter of agreement with the university in which the employer agrees to encourage flexibility for employees to participate in MLK commemorative events and other events that increase sensitivity to diversity and inclusion.

If you receive a negative response to your request to participate in such events, your union may be able to help. Please call your Union Representative or the CTU office (517-355-1903).

"There are still forces in America that want to divide us along racial lines, religious lines, sex, class. But we've come too far; we've made too much progress to stop or to pull back. We must go forward. And I believe we will get there."
—John Lewis

2021 continued from p. 1

of CTs and the other 5,000 union-represented employees, we are a formidable force.

May 2021 be a better year for all of us

One last thing, take good care of yourselves this holiday season. We all need to take the time to recharge ourselves so we are ready to take on the new year and what it will bring. Take time to reflect on this last year and all we have learned. Then look to what we will accomplish with the next 365 days. Knowing CTs like I do, it will be great.

MLK Commission of Mid-Michigan takes to the air

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission of Mid-Michigan will not present its popular community luncheon in Lansing this year.

Instead, the Commission's thirty-sixth annual celebration will be aired on WILX-TV 10 on Monday, January 18, 2021, from 7–8 p.m. The theme is "Out of a mountain of despair, a stone of hope." The keynote speaker is Dr. Bernice King, the youngest child of civil rights leaders Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

A stated goal of the Mid-Michigan MLK Commission is "promoting awareness and appreciation of the Civil Rights movement and advocacy of the principles and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr." The Commission sponsors yearly essay and art scholarship contests for sixth through eleventh graders in the Greater Lansing Area.





Board actions

October 2019 through September 2020

Board meetings are regularly scheduled twice a month, on first and third Tuesdays, and members are welcome to attend. The CTU constitution requires the executive board to meet at least once a month. Because of the pandemic, meetings are being held via zoom and members who wish to attend are asked to contact the office to make arrangements.

This article includes board actions that took place October 2019 through September 2021. All expenditure decisions are included, but the list does not represent meetings in their entirety. Members can receive copies of complete minutes through the mail or email by contacting the CTU office at 355-1903.

October 1, 2019

Voted to transfer \$25,000 from savings to the checking account.

Agreed to send up to two additional (four total) people to the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) lunch on October 8 at \$20 each.

Decided to send up to two people to “WISE (Workers in Solidarity and Education) Conference” at \$575 per person plus lodging and travel.

Agreed to send up to five attendees to the Labor Education Program, “The End of the Deal?: The Safety Net and Worker Rights in Peril,” at \$60 per person.

October 15

At the request of a member, agreed to provide 30 pounds of U.S. and union made candy for the 517 community event.

Agreed to reimburse \$275 of dues to a former member who had transferred out of CTU.

Voted to purchase a \$185 quarter-page ad in the Drug and Alcohol Safety Handbook distributed by the Capitol City Fraternal Order of Police to attendees of the Annual Oldies Music Show in Bath.

Agreed to send up to two attendees to the 36th Annual Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame Induction Celebration at \$175 each.

Renewed \$209 membership in the Society for Human Resource Management.

Donated \$300 to support repairs to the pier at River Point Park at the request of the Greater Lansing Labor Council.

Agreed to donate \$50 to provide hot dogs for the MSU Flu Clinic at the FRIB.

October 17 (via email)

Agreed to spend \$262.50 to purchase vegetable trays for the Capital Area United Way 100th Anniversary Gala.

November 5

Voted to transfer \$25,000 from savings to the checking account.

Agreed to send contract administrators to the American Arbitration Association (AAA) “Labor Grievance Processing” at \$195 each plus transportation.

Received report on the FRIB flu clinic and CTU’s support and participation.

Donated \$250 to the Old News Boys Association of Lansing.

Donated \$100 to the Capital Area United Way as a labor organization.

Agreed to provide flower arrangements for the memorial of a staff member’s sister. [Shona Key]

November 19

Agreed to purchase a \$100 ad in the

program of the 35th Annual Holiday Luncheon presented by the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission of Mid-Michigan.

In lieu of flowers, agreed to donate \$100 to assist a former UR’s family.

November 21 (via email)

Agreed to donate four \$25 gift cards to be used as prizes for the MSU Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Student Conference.

December 17

Agreed to donate \$200 to support an MSU student family for Christmas.

Agreed to purchase eight tickets at \$50 each for the 2020 luncheon of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission of Mid-Michigan.

January 10, 2020 (via email)

Agreed to send up to four additional people to the Mid-Michigan LERA lunch meeting on health care trends at a cost of \$20 each.

January 14

Voted to send up to four CTs to the United Way/AFL-CIO CAP community services classes at a cost of \$40 each.

Agreed to purchase up to six tickets to the CAUW Women United fundraiser “speakeasy” at a cost of \$35 per ticket.

Approved donation of \$150 to the WKAR Radio Reading Service.

Donated \$100 to the Capitol Area Literary Coalition (The Reading People).

Voted to transfer \$25,000 from savings to the checking account.

Committed up to \$1,500 to purchase a laptop computer for the president if necessary. [Gigi Look]

February 4

At the direction of members attending the January Membership Meeting, donated \$1,100 for the Greater Lansing Food Bank “Empty Plate” fundraiser, \$1,000 for the MSU Safe Place “Race for the Place” fundraiser, \$500 to the MSU Student Food Bank, \$500 to the Tri-County Office on Aging, and \$250

Actions continued on next page

Actions continued from previous page

to the “Walk for Warmth” fundraiser.

Agreed to renew *The HR Specialist* newsletter for \$199 per year.

Agreed to buy up to four \$30 tickets to the Dia de la Mujer Conference.

Agreed to purchase a \$250 ad in the Dia de la Mujer program booklet.

Agreed to send up to two board members to the “Labor Notes” Conference at a cost of \$115 each plus expenses. *{Ed. note: this conference was postponed until 2021.}*

March 3

Donated \$250 to support two Meridian Township recycling events.

Agreed to send two members to the CareerTrack Conference for Administrative Assistants at \$199 each.

Agreed to purchase a \$185 page ad for the Lansing IAFF Local 421’s 14th Annual Detroit Lions basketball game.

Voted to sponsor one week-long camp scholarship for Mystic Lake Union Camp at \$550.

March 25 (via email)

Agreed to a request by the Tri-County Office on Aging to alter our usual \$500 fall fundraiser table sponsorship to a general donation. The fundraiser will not be held this year.

March 26 (via email)

Donated \$500 to the Capital Area United Way’s Emergency Relief Fund to help provide loans to people who need assistance with rent/mortgages, etc. during the pandemic.

March 27 (via email)

Returned a 90% contract administrator position to 100% because of demands imposed by the pandemic.

April 7

Agreed to renew \$295 skills assessment software that lets members practice for Human Resources’ skills evaluations.

Voted to renew *Detroit Free Press* sub-

scription at \$374 for one year.

Decided to donate the amount of two registration fees (\$115 each) to Labor Notes and ask for a refund of the remaining two fees after the conference was postponed.

Voted to increase contract administrators’ salaries by 2.75% to match MSU employee raises and acknowledge the increased work and stress associated with the pandemic.

Canceled the April 29 Membership Meeting due to the Governor’s Stay in Place Order.

April 21

Donated \$250 to the Capital Area United Way Emergency Relief Fund.

Donated \$250 to the Greater Lansing Food Bank.

Acknowledged the honor to CTU of being presented with the 2020 LaRonda Brown Recognition Award by the MSU Student Parent Program.

May 18

Donated \$100 to the Capital Area Humane Society.

Donated \$50 to Sparrow Foundation Children’s “May is for Miracles” fundraiser.

Donated \$100 to the Ingham County Animal Shelter.

June 2

Approved a donation of \$300 for the Cristo Rey Golf Outing fundraiser.

Agreed to sponsor a CTU can drive as a donation to Habitat for Humanity. A donation of 12,000 cans would sponsor a ramp being built at the home of someone in need.

June 16

Agreed to provide a farewell gift of \$200 for a departing contract administrator. [Vanessa Rengstorff]

Discussed plans and options concerning the upcoming vacancy of our contract administrator position.

CTnotables

2020 C-T award winner

Office Assistant Erin Millikan is the 2020 winner of the Clerical-Technical Recognition Award.

Congratulations!

This year’s award

was presented in a private virtual event recognizing Millikan for her innovation, diligence and contributions as a Clerkship Resources Specialist in MSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine

Millikan is the nineteenth recipient of the Clerical-Technical Recognition Award, which was established by Dr. Charles Gliozzo, Director Emeritus of MSU’s Study Abroad program, and his late wife Marjorie to recognize outstanding CTs.



Erin Millikan

It’s not too late to Share!

Donations to United Way are down in our community as more people seek assistance due to losses caused by the pandemic. As an organization, CTU makes donations to many of our community assistance organizations, and we are certain that some members and many of their families have sought out these resources in the past year.

If you are able to do so, please consider donating to the community through MSU Shares, a partner of the United Way. Information about the program and directions on how to donate through payroll deduction and other means is available at msucc.msu.edu.

Although the formal MSU Shares campaign ended October 31, 2020, you are welcome to donate to this year’s campaign through March 31, 2021.



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

CTcalendar

January 17-23. A week of MLK commemorative events. See p. 5.

January 17. The MLK Commission of Mid-Michigan hosts its annual celebration. WILX-TV 10. 7-8 p.m.

January 26. Membership Meeting, 5:20 p.m. Members will receive details about connecting through zoom.

February 11-April 1. Lisa Laughman presents a live webinar on “Essential Skills for Navigating Difficult Times.” This course provides an opportunity to

build emotional resilience and psychological flexibility skills to aid in the navigation of work/life challenges. Thursdays, 9-10:30 a.m. Free.

Solidarity *continued from p. 4*
 caught the attention of several members. The raffle was for a CATA bus pass basket and CTU calendars.

Roseann Bills won the gift basket. Calendar winners: Ruth Blair, Toni Douglass, Helen Farr, Terika Hernandez, Stephanie Luna, Tracy Olsen, Relanda Price, Elizabeth Stanton, Laura Stevens, Amanda VanEtten, and Paula Walker.

Watch your email for other suggestions about how we can stay connected and participate in our union during the pandemic. Have an idea?



Please share! Send ideas and suggestions to ctu@ctumsu.org.

Did you know?
 Federal and state laws do not specifically grant Michigan workers paid or unpaid time off on holidays.

Thank the unions!

