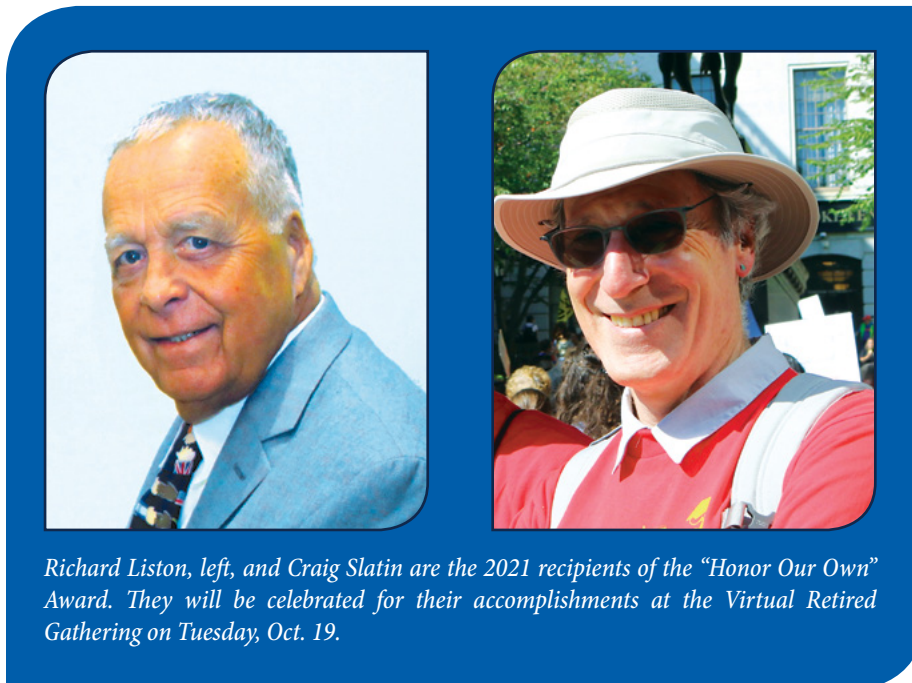


Two MTA Retired Educators Receive “Honor Our Own” Award

Jonathan Ng



Richard Liston, left, and Craig Slatin are the 2021 recipients of the “Honor Our Own” Award. They will be celebrated for their accomplishments at the Virtual Retired Gathering on Tuesday, Oct. 19.

Two MTA Retired members have been selected as recipients of the “Honor Our Own” Award for their outstanding influence on students, new educators and other association members.

Craig Slatin, a retired professor of public health at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, and Richard Liston, a retired special education teacher and former president of the Everett Teachers Association, are dedicated unionists – and both have been busy activists in their retirement.

Slatin and Liston will be celebrated for their accomplishments at the 2021 Virtual Retired Members Gathering, which will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 19. As is true each year, the honorees are nominated by fellow educators.

Rafael Moure-Eraso, who serves on the MTA Retired Members Committee, nominated Slatin for the award. He praised Slatin’s advocacy as an organizer for public education.

Moure-Eraso went on to note that he has found Slatin “in the middle of many good fights,” among them the effort to stop the trend of austerity that has

Continued on page 11

RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE 2021-2022

CHAIR

Patrick Patterson, *Ipswich*

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Mary Cowhey, *Florence*
Seth Evans, *Brookline*
Kip Fonsh, *Leverett*
* Sonia Fortin, *Framingham*
* Silvia Golijov, *Ashland*
** Jacqueline Gorrie, *Randolph*
** Andrei Joseph, *Chestnut Hill*
* Jen Meagher, *Ashland*
Dale Melcher, *Northampton*
Rafael Moure-Eraso, *Medford*
Phyllis Neufeld, *Burlington*
Bonnie Page, *Tewksbury*
*** Robin Smith, *Springfield*
** Anne Wass, *Carver*

RETIRED MEMBERS ORGANIZER

Robert Whalen
rwhalen@massteacher.org
617.878.8206 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8206

AFFILIATE SERVICES COORDINATOR

Renee Gatewood
rgatewood@massteacher.org
617.878.8208 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8208

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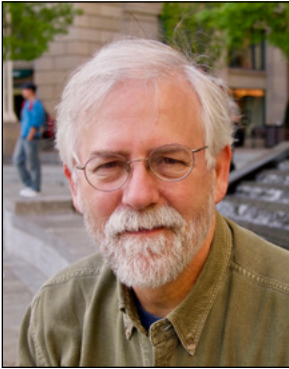
MTA MEMBERSHIP DIVISION

617.878.8118 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8118

* Appointed Active Member
** MTA Board of Directors
*** President’s Designee

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Patrick Patterson



MTA RMC Chair Patrick Patterson

As we go to press the annual MTA Retired Members Gathering is coming together. In hindsight, we made the right decision to continue as we did last year holding the event virtually. It is scheduled for Oct. 19 and 20. We have shortened it to two days in recognition of the Zoom fatigue that can set in. To make up for the reduction in days, we

have doubled up on the number of workshops.

Unfortunately, the resurgence of the pandemic with the spread of the delta variant has returned us to a level of infection not seen since spring. True, the number of infections is not as high, but when coupled with the potential waning in effectiveness of vaccines, it makes for conditions that call for caution, especially for our risk group of retirees.

The MTA Board of Directors in August approved a motion that “supports requiring COVID-19 vaccinations of all education workers and eligible students in public schools and colleges throughout the state.” With the recent approval by the Food and Drug Administration of the Pfizer vaccine, the goal of making schools safer in the fall is one step closer to being realized. In addition, the board’s motion emphasized the importance of building ventilation to prevent the spread of the virus.

The MTA Environmental Health and Safety Committee was busy this summer testing and assessing the quality of ventilation across the school systems of Massachusetts. The results, though, were not encouraging, showing that ventilation is woefully inadequate and in desperate need of an upgrade across the schools. Governor Charlie Baker and state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey Riley have downplayed the importance of ventilation, undoubtedly because of the cost of retrofitting buildings.

Funding, of course, remains the central issue, impacting not only the quality of education, but also — as the pandemic has shown — the importance of educators’ and students’ health and safety through the infrastructure of school buildings.

The Fair Share Amendment would provide a much-needed source of funding to address these issues. A proposed amendment to the Massachusetts constitution, it is scheduled to be included as a statewide referendum question on the ballot in November 2022. The amendment would increase the marginal state tax rate by 4 percentage points on income over \$1 million, providing an estimated \$2 billion a year more for education and transportation.

Some have asked: But is that fair? Are we not all taxed at the same rate in Massachusetts?

Yes, we all pay the same state income tax rate. But if all state and local taxes are taken into account, taxpayers in the top 1 percent pay about 20 percent less than the bottom third, according to an analysis by the nonprofit Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center.

The passage of the Fair Share Amendment would move Massachusetts in the direction of tax equity, joining other states, such as California and Minnesota, that have implemented similar measures. It would start to address issues of racial disparity because Black and Latinx residents, as a result of systemic inequities, are disproportionately represented at the lower income levels, and pay a higher share of their income in taxes.

The Fair Share Amendment will be a central topic at the Gathering. The MTA Retired Members Committee is working on opportunities for members to become active in getting the amendment passed. We will of course pay attention to concerns for safety, given the risk posed by the COVID-19 virus. ■

If you have some news from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send it to Robert Whalen at rwhalen@massteacher.org.

REPORT FROM THE BOARD – AUGUST 25, 2021

Democracy is difficult, demanding and vital



MTA RMC Member Andrei Joseph

With the school year approaching and COVID-19 infections rising, MTA leadership called a special meeting of the Board of Directors to clarify our union’s position regarding masks, vaccinations and safety. The importance of these issues is undeniable. Our members are exhausted – physically and emotionally – from the burden

of the last school year and the ongoing pandemic. The delta variant is prompting an upsurge in cases across the state and country. As we have 115,000 members and more than 300 locals, we went into this meeting understanding that it would be impossible to reach a position that everyone would endorse. Nonetheless, we searched for broad consensus.

Prior to the special meeting, conducted on the Zoom platform, each board member was encouraged to poll their region by reaching out to the presidents from the locals they represented. Our region is unusual. We have over 10,000 retirees and I couldn’t call all of you. Instead, I reached out to the members of the retired committee. From them I heard admonitions to follow the science, use extreme caution and make the return to classrooms as safe as possible for our members, our students and the larger community. When we were asked for feedback at the beginning of the meeting, I added my report to others from around the state.

Perhaps 75 people participated in the Zoom call, approximately 55 of whom were board members. Others

included MTA staff and tech support. We debated, then crafted, a five-paragraph statement that eventually became our official position, which was made public through a press release. There was lively debate, lots of input, different voices and many attempts to improve the document. Unfortunately, a few people felt compelled to speak again and again. There was some nitpicking – yes, we did debate the location of a comma! Concerns arose from different people. Representatives of higher education members said the original draft failed to focus sufficient attention on their concerns. Some argued for decentralization, that each local should make their own choice. Several noted the need to bargain whatever regulations were being put in place. My position, formed in part from committee input, and in part from my own beliefs, was to support strong, stringent regulations. I believe the needs of the community trump the position of any individual.

To our credit, after multiple amendments, and amendments to the amendments, we were able to reach a position that won overwhelming support. The vote to adopt was approved, 46 – 4.

The MTA now supports requiring COVID-19 vaccinations of all education workers and eligible students in public schools and colleges throughout the state. We also support regular testing in lieu of vaccination for those not yet eligible or for those for whom vaccination is not medically advisable. Furthermore, school districts and campuses should guarantee upgraded ventilation systems, access to masks, rapid and consistent access to COVID-19 testing and appropriate social distancing. ♦

FREQUENTLY REQUESTED CONTACT INFORMATION

Massachusetts Teachers’ Retirement System (MTRS) www.mass.gov/mtrs	State Board of Retirement www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire
MTRS Headquarters 617.679.6877 500 Rutherford Avenue, Suite 210 Charlestown, MA 02129-1628	SBR Boston Office 617.367.7770 One Winter Street, 8th Floor Boston, MA 02108
MTRS Western Office 413.784.1711 One Monarch Place, Suite 510 Springfield, MA 01144-4028	SBR Springfield Office 413.730.6135 463 Dwight Street, Room 109 Springfield, MA 01103
Questions regarding your MTA Member ID Card or Calendar can be directed to: Renee Gatewood – rgatewood@massteacher.org – 617.878.8000, ext. 8208	

MTA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



On July 29, the Massachusetts Legislature recessed for the summer after holding what are expected to be the last formal sessions until lawmakers reconvene at some point in September. Formal sessions are forums attended by all legislators where major legislation is debated and voted on. As required by the state constitution, the House and Senate will continue to meet informally until formal sessions resume, but only to conduct minor business and to pass noncontroversial legislation. The summer recess brought to a close the first seven months of the 2021-2022 session, a time during which a few notable developments occurred relative to the MTA's legislative priorities:

- On July 16, Governor Charlie Baker signed into law the FY2022 state budget that was passed by the House and Senate on July 9. It is generally a status quo budget in terms of funding for public schools and colleges. On a positive note, however, it does include a 3 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) on the first \$13,000 in pension benefits for retired members of the state and teachers' retirement systems. The governor also vetoed several provisions in the budget, including the House and Senate's proposal to increase the hourly work limit for public-sector retirees. As part of its budget, the Legislature included a modest increase in the number of hours allowed, from 960 to 1,200. The House and Senate now have the opportunity to override the governor's veto of this provision. The MTA has contacted legislative leadership urging that they reject the governor's veto.
- On June 9, state legislators voted overwhelmingly to place the Fair Share Amendment before voters on the

November 2022 statewide ballot. The constitutional amendment would raise approximately \$2 billion a year in new revenue for spending on transportation and public education by adding a 4 percent tax on incomes above \$1 million. The Raise Up Massachusetts coalition, of which MTA is a central member, is hard at work in support of the ballot proposal. The MTA has already started to organize member-to-member outreach through digital and physical pledge cards, phone banking and door knocking. **To pledge your support for the Fair Share Amendment, please visit www.raiseupma.us/mta.**

- All MTA legislative priorities have been assigned bill numbers and have been referred to the appropriate committees for further review and consideration. This includes S.1683/H.2623, *An Act to provide fair and affordable public retiree benefits*, S.1721/H.2594, *An Act relative to the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System*, and S.1791/H.2620, *An Act to provide a retirement enhancement opportunity for certain members of the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System*, all of which have been referred to the Joint Committee on Public Service. The next step for each of these three proposals is to be scheduled for a legislative hearing at some point in the coming months. To date, eight of the MTA's other priority bills have received legislative committee hearings, MTA leadership and members testified at each. **To learn more about the MTA's priority legislation or to contact your legislators in support of a bill, please visit www.massteacher.org/legislation.**
- The MTA will continue to advocate for the Legislature take bold action in support of students, and active and retired educators. This includes working to advance our legislative agenda as well as urging the House and Senate to support key MTA priorities as they debate how to appropriate billions of dollars in discretionary funds from the federal *American Rescue Plan Act*.

Should you have any questions, comments, or ideas, please contact the MTA's Division of Government Relations at 617-878-8119.

► For a full listing of MTA legislative priorities, go to massteacher.org/legislation.

2021 MTA Virtual Retired Members Gathering

Sponsored by the MTA Retired Members Committee

DAY 1: Tuesday, October 19

9:30 – 10 a.m.

Intro/Welcome

Chair, Patrick Patterson

MTA President, Merrie Najimy

MTA Vice President, Max Page

10 – 10:30 a.m.

Awarding of the 2021 Honor Our Own Award

Presented to Richard Liston by Jackie Gorrie

Presented to Craig Slatin by Rafael Moure-Eraso

10:30 a.m. – Noon

Session 1 Plenary Session: The Fair Share Amendment Campaign

****Intermission****

1 – 2:30 p.m.

Session 2: two workshop options

2:45 – 4:15 p.m.

Session 3: two workshop options

DAY 2: Wednesday, October 20

10 – 11:30 a.m.

Session 1 Plenary Session: Update on COVID-19

****Intermission****

1 – 2:30 p.m.

Session 2: two workshop options

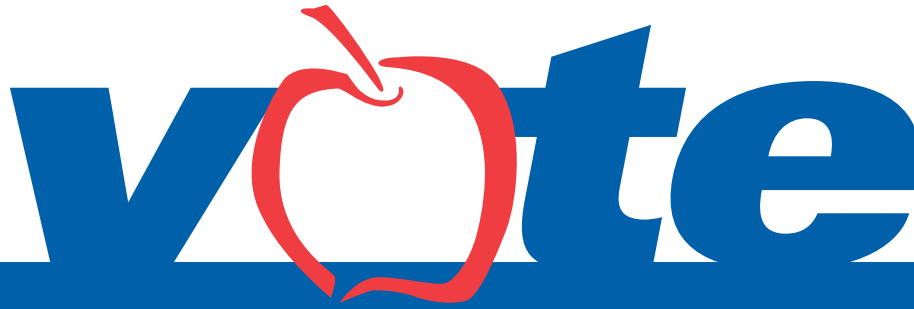
2:45 – 4:15 p.m.

Session 3: two workshop options



Stay tuned for registration information

www.massteacher.org/retired



VOICE OF TEACHERS FOR EDUCATION

Elections matter.

They also cost money.

The MTA's **VOTE Political Action Committee (PAC)** contributes to candidates for statewide and legislative offices who demonstrate committed support for issues important to active and retired educators, students and public education.

By pooling the contributions of MTA members, the VOTE PAC gives educators a stronger voice in helping to elect candidates who will champion the MTA's priorities on Beacon Hill and fight against anti-public employee and anti-public education proposals.

**Please consider making
a contribution to the
VOTE PAC today.**

*Your generous contribution to the
VOTE PAC will help us stand with
elected officials who will stand with us.*

Contributions can be made in any amount up to \$500 annually. You may contribute online by visiting massteacher.org/votepac.

Contributions may also be mailed to:
MTA VOTE PAC, 2 Heritage Dr., 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171.

When making a contribution, please be sure to provide your name and address, as well as your occupation and employer, if applicable.

MTA's VOTE (Voice of Teachers for Education) and the National Education Association's Fund for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from members for political purposes including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of education who are candidates for state and federal office. Seventy percent of contributions will be given to MTA's VOTE PAC and 30 percent will be given to the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. Contributions are not a condition of membership or employment and are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education from receiving donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and MTA, and their immediate families, will be returned forthwith.

[**massteacher.org/votepac**](https://massteacher.org/votepac)

YOUR NEA RETIRED DELEGATES TOGETHER AGAIN VIRTUALLY

Jackie Gorrie



MTA RMC Member Jackie Gorrie

The NEA Retired Annual Meeting and the NEA Representative Assembly were held virtually for the second time in the organization's history. Representing retired member interests at the meetings were: Jackie and Stephen Gorrie; Bob Brousseau; Claire and Dennis Naughton; Eileen Cleary; Gerry Ruane; Richard Liston; Edith Cannon; Richard Shea and Timothy Sullivan. These

representatives were selected as a result of your votes in the NEA -RA retired delegate election.

The NEA Retired Annual Meeting had been scheduled to take place in Denver, but instead was held virtually over two days. Because of the new interactive platform, delegates debated bylaws, and new business items, listened to candidates' speeches, applauded states with membership growth, and announced scholarship and communications award winners.

MTA Retired again was proud to have one of its own, Stephen Gorrie, serving as the elections committee chair. Steve clearly and competently guided candidates and delegates through the details of the election process. All retired delegates voted electronically for the Bylaws and Resolution Committee representatives. A secret ballot was mailed to all retiree delegates to vote for the NEA Retired officers.

Elected were:

Marilyn Warner (Fla.) - NEA Retired Secretary

Anita Gibson (Ala.) and Barb Schram (Mich.) - Retired Directors on the NEA Board of Directors

Meg Gruber (Va.) and Janice Poirier (Fla.) - NEA Retired Executive Council

Janet Kilgus (Ill.) - reelected as NEA Director Alternate

The retired delegates then participated for three days in the virtual MTA caucuses and the virtual NEA-RA. NEA President Becky Pringle presided over the representative assembly for the first time as president. The theme of the assembly this year was "Uniting for a better future for our students, our educators and our communities."

Each day the meeting focused on one of the pillars of our union — professional practice, racial and social justice, unionism and education justice. President Joe Biden, first lady Jill Biden and the voting rights activist and former Georgia state representative, Stacey Abrams, each addressed the delegates. Two new members, Ronald 'Duff' Martin (Wis.) and Gladys Fatima Marquez (Ill.), were elected to the NEA Executive Committee. Both were endorsed by the MTA delegation. Two constitutional amendments and two bylaw amendments also were adopted by the delegates.

One of the new bylaw amendments carries great importance to our active ESP members. Bylaw amendment 2-7h will establish two new retired membership categories, ESP Retired Life and Retired Annual ESP Dues. In both categories, dues will be set at 60 percent of the existing Active Professional Retired Life and Active Annual Dues. This bylaw amendment was actively supported by NEA Retired leaders and delegates. It acknowledges that many ESP members make less than a living wage and find it difficult to continue as NEA Retired members when they retire.

The 2022 NEA-RA is set for Dallas. Let's hope that the representative assembly next year will return to a face-to-face meeting, where thousands of delegates democratically determine the direction of our NEA.

Thank you for exercising one of the most important benefits that comes with your MTA Retired membership — your right to vote. ♦

NEA NEW BYLAW ON RETIRED ESP DUES

2021 NEA RA Approves Modified Dues Structure for ESPs

At the 2021 NEA Representative Assembly, held July 2 – 6, the delegates approved a Bylaw Amendment that will modify the dues rate for ESPs joining NEA Retired. Pursuant to Bylaw Amendment 2-7h, adopted at the 2021 NEA Representative Assembly, NEA has created new retired membership types representing members, who at the time of retirement, were Education Support

Professional members. Commencing Sept. 1, 2021, Retired ESP for Life and Annual dues will be set at 60 percent of the existing Active Professional Retired for Life and Annual dues, as approved by the NEA Board of Directors. That translates to \$21 versus \$35 for an NEA Retired Annual Membership and \$180 versus \$300 for an NEA Retired Lifetime Membership. ■

MEET SOME OF THE NEW FACES ON THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE



Phyllis Neufeld, Burlington

Phyllis Neufeld is a lifelong educator and advocate. She is past president of the Lexington Education Association, the MTA Executive Committee and the MTA Board of Directors. She has participated in Lobby Days as an MTA-trained lobbyist and testified at the State House. Phyllis has also built relationships with state representatives and senators, and recently joined Wisdom Warriors.

In her spare time, Phyllis is chair of her Temple's Social Justice Committee, vice-chair of the Burlington Democratic Town Committee and an elected member of Burlington's Town Meeting. She also serves as a member of the Burlington By-Review Committee and is a member of Burlington Against Racism, a community organization.

Phyllis has taken up photographing wildlife in retirement. She enjoys golf, dancing, mah-jongg, and spending time with family and friends. Her daughter is the light of her life.

"Retirees are in a position to benefit education – but our collective power has not yet been harnessed by MTA," she said. "I want to work on changing that!"



Dale Melcher, Northampton

Dale Melcher retired from the Labor Center at University of Massachusetts Amherst after 20 years as a labor educator. While at UMass she was active in the Professional Staff Union, where she served as a delegate, negotiated many collective bargaining contracts, offered training, and served on the Sick Leave Bank Committee.

While at UMass she was deeply involved as an organizer, planner, and teacher for the Northeast Summer School for Women in Unions and Worker Organizations, and was a co-founder of the Women's Institute for Leadership Development in Massachusetts.

In Northampton, where she has lived for nearly 50 years, Melcher serves on the board of the Northampton Education Foundation and chairs its Small Grants committee, which awards grants for education. In retirement she has found joy in taking up watercolor painting and pencil drawing, gardening and yoga. She is active in the MTA retiree community and enjoys visiting her daughter, son-in-law and granddaughters in Wyoming and, most recently, taking flying lessons. She and her husband, Bill Newman, have two grown daughters and another grandchild on the way – this one in Mauritius.

ARE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS SAVING WITH MTA BENEFITS?

A message from MTA Benefits

MTA Benefits offers a variety of savings opportunities for members, from trusted insurance and financial programs to discounts at attractions and local retailers. Members have options when it comes to auto and home insurance, with discounts being offered by both Liberty Mutual and Educators Insurance Agency. Savings also are available on travel, magazine subscriptions, health and wellness programs, medical transport services and much more.

The Discount Directory, our listing of local retailers offering MTA member discounts, can be found exclusively online.

New discounts this year are provided by the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth, World Eye Bookshop and Worcester Red Sox.

Don't forget that your family members are eligible for an MTA Family Membership, allowing them to participate in the MTA Benefits programs. This includes counseling for student loan debt, the mortgage savings program and childcare discounts. Visit www.mtabenefits.com for complete benefit program and discount information. ■

THE CLIMATE IS IN CRISIS AND MTA RETIRED MEMBERS ARE TAKING ACTION

When retired educators and MTA members Seth Evans and Tom Rawson retired from teaching recently, they knew they wanted to get involved in climate change activism. They didn't know each other at the time, nor did they know exactly what form their activism would take, but in August they finished co-facilitating a four-part webinar – “Can We Stop Climate Change?”

They plan to partner again to lead a program in October, and are inviting MTA retirees and active members to join the program from 7:30 – 9 p.m. on four consecutive Wednesdays, from Sept. 22 through Oct. 13. (Other dates are available in September and October, as well, but those programs will be taught by other trained facilitators.) To sign up or to receive more information, please contact Seth Evans at setherkim@verizon.net.

The “Can We Stop Climate Change?” webinar series was originally created by activists at Elders' Climate Action of Massachusetts, where Evans serves on the leadership team. It has since been spun off as a group that is dedicated solely to education. “The purpose was to create a way for people who were concerned about climate change to learn more about the science, the impacts, and the solutions so that they could engage more confidently in conversations and organizing around the issues,” Evans said. “With the devastation being caused by climate change so evident this summer, and the alarming report by the U.N. panel that things could get dramatically worse before they get better, education like this is even more vital.”

The webinar will be highly participatory, with the number of participants capped at 15 people. “The main goal is to get



people to increase their activity level, whether it be talking to friends and neighbors, participating in local sustainability groups, taking part in demonstrations, or advocating with legislators. That only happens when there is trust in the group and confidence in the information being presented,” Rawson said.

Evans, an upper elementary educator, and Rawson, a middle school science teacher, both came to their webinar leadership roles having taught about climate change to their respective students for many years. Rawson is also involved in climate work with the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Evans is an elected member of the MTA Retired Members Committee, and remains deeply engaged in education policy work. ♦

Are you already engaged in climate change activism?

Consider bringing your experience to the MTA Climate Action Network (CAN), which also conducts workshops, works on K-12 curriculum, and engages in coalition-building with other labor groups on climate change issues.

For more information, contact mtaclimateaction@gmail.com.

MTA MEMBERS ORGANIZED AND ACTIVE IN CAMPAIGN FOR FAIR SHARE AMENDMENT

Mary MacDonald

MTA members are taking action throughout the state to share information and raise awareness about the Fair Share Amendment, a measure designed to ensure that the wealthiest residents of the state pay their fair share to support public education and transportation.

They are working with fellow members of Raise Up Massachusetts – a coalition that brings together education, community, faith and labor groups, including the MTA – to build on past successes such as raising the minimum wage and ensuring paid sick time for workers.

The Fair Share Amendment, a proposed change to the Massachusetts Constitution, will appear as a question on the November 2022 statewide ballot. By adding 4 percentage points to the tax on annual income above \$1 million, the amendment would raise an estimated \$2 billion annually for public education and transportation needs.

Significant amounts of the funding would be directed to public schools, colleges and universities, potentially helping with everything from reducing class sizes at the elementary level to strengthening higher education programs and staffing.

The current activism, which involves collecting pledge cards and other actions to build public support, marks a key stage in what will be over a year of active campaigning.



The amendment is expected to face significant opposition from anti-tax groups and other elements of the right wing.

Because large amounts of funds for schools are raised from local taxes, areas of the state that have less wealth – including communities of color that endure the impact of structural racism – are not able to achieve the funding levels of more affluent communities. The Fair

Share Amendment would help provide a funding stream for all districts.

Roberta Goldman, an MTA Retired member who is also a Senate District Coordinator, is among the members participating in the effort.

Part of her approach, Goldman said, is to talk to people about how state taxes are collected and distributed in Massachusetts.

Fair Share is not just the name of the amendment, but a goal of the funding.

“We need to actually think more about the whole picture,” Goldman said. “We have to educate the disadvantaged communities, as well as the advantaged communities.”

For more information, visit raiseupma.org and watch for updates on massteacher.org. ■



UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION TODAY TO

**Get an MTA Retired
face mask**

Send your updated email address, mailing address and preferred phone number to

RETIRED@MASSTEACHER.ORG

COME JOIN THE WISDOM WARRIORS

Calling on retired MTA members to show up to support

- Locals and their issues
- The MTA legislative agenda

Wisdom Warriors is a statewide program of the Retired Members Committee of the MTA. We have coordinators in both Eastern and Western Massachusetts, and we welcome all retired MTA members as an important way to stay involved with our union!

The Wisdom Warriors provide solidarity and encouragement to locals in need, demonstrate union solidarity, and engage in friendship and fun while supporting MTA-sponsored legislation and our broader mission to champion public education. While frequently injecting song and humor into otherwise challenging situations, the particular manifestation of our solidarity varies according to the issue, the circumstance, and the members' needs.

We have set up an email list of retired MTA members who are willing to be contacted when we receive a "bat signal" request to support a local struggle or a statewide action. If you can participate in the action, that's great. If not, don't worry about it!



To join our list, simply send an email to mtawisdomwarriors@gmail.com with your contact information. Please include where you live. You will then be contacted by either the eastern or western coordinator to get you on the list.

Being mindful of retirees' health during the pandemic, any in-person support activities will be outdoors and follow mask and social distancing requirements. Other activities will be by Zoom, email, or phone.

Remember – they can't fire us, so "good trouble" in support of our union's goals was never so much fun! Join us! ♦

HONOR OUR OWN AWARDS *CONTINUED*

harmd Massachusetts public colleges and universities, as well as preK-12 schools.

"Craig Slatin is an example of the politically engaged educator who can show results for his years of organizing and advocating for an effective public education," Moure-Eraso wrote. "He has educated a generation of students to address those challenges and been an effective activist in public education policy."

Everett Teachers Association President Kimberly Auger, who nominated Liston, said Liston is a mentor to many teachers and students.

Liston, an MTA activist for decades, led two Everett strikes in the late 1980s to win fair and equitable working conditions for present and future educators. Even after retirement,

Auger said, Liston regularly works to help fellow educators and lift up public education.

In addition to volunteering at schools and remaining an activist, Liston serves as a board member of the Everett Teachers Association and until June 30 was on the Retired Members Committee.

"The impact he made on his students still resonates today, as many reach out to express their appreciation for all of his encouragement and support, long after they were students in his classroom," Auger wrote in Liston's nomination form.

Further information on the Gathering will be posted soon on massteacher.org/retired. ♦



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MTA **REPORTER**

RETIRED *The Voice of MTA Retired Members*

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