JOIN OUR ASSOCIATION

Strength In Numbers For Higher Education
Dear Higher Education Employees,

As you prepare to step on to campuses across our great state, I want to congratulate you on your amazing successes! Our students who graduate from Maine’s public colleges and universities are achieving great things and that is, in part, due to you—the hard working educators who keep campuses running. You are truly the backbone of Maine’s higher education system and for that I want to thank you.

Your enthusiasm for learning and your passion for your students make you a wonderful addition to schools across the state. I want to let you know there are thousands of members of the Maine Education Association who are here to help you along the way, both in and out of the classroom.

**Leave your door open**
Speak up, let others hear your ideas and share with colleagues. As a member of our professional organization, representing more than 24,000 employees working in public schools and Maine’s higher education institutions, you have access to a wealth of knowledge unlike any other to build your skills.

**Grow as a leader**
Members run the MEA. As a member, everyone has a voice. The Association gives you the power to exercise that voice and have a say in the content of your contract. Being an MEA member gives you a support system and opportunities to be a leader in your profession.

**Keep your passion**
The MEA is the strongest advocate in the state for public higher education, working to ensure educators have a voice in policy that affects your profession and your livelihood. As an MEA member you can put your passion to work helping shape the public education system. Our priority is always students and leading the way to great public schools for every Maine student. There isn’t anything the MEA doesn’t do to help support public higher education in the state of Maine!

**Keep moving forward**
Together we can take charge of our professions with one united voice and help every student along the way. In the words of Frank Lloyd Wright, “You have to go wholeheartedly into anything in order to achieve anything worth having.”

Sincerely,

Lois Kilby-Chesley
NBPTS Teacher, RSU 5 Freeport
President, Maine Education Association
Building A World Class Workforce

As the foundation of every great institution, MEA higher education members truly keep Maine’s colleges and universities running. Working together with the MEA, our members achieve great professional success despite tough financial times. The strength of the Association allows higher education members to have access to MEA staff that work to improve the system and the work environment in the state.

Advocating For Your Interests
MEA is Maine’s largest and most influential faculty and staff association with a proud record of having negotiated more contracts, processed and won more grievances and fought and won more legal claims than any other union.

As a member you will have access to MEA staff that will fight for everything from better contracts to better benefits and better retirement.

Protecting Your Rights
The MEA has two full-time professionals, two assistants and an excellent legal department that stands behind our higher education affiliates. The Association has the resources and personnel to meet your representation needs. Whether it is a grievance issue or a contract dispute, the MEA guides members through any issue. As an example, the MEA recently won a “just cause” dismissal case for an UMPSA employee. The employee was reinstated with back pay and benefits totaling more than $64,000—proof membership really does pay.

Supporting Your Profession
Working together, the MEA advances the cause of faculty and staff in higher education. The MEA also provides grants through support of the Higher Education Council of local affiliates. Membership makes a difference!

MEA higher education members gather in Augusta to talk to their legislators aided by the MEA Government Relations Department.
How does MEA Advocate for Me?

As a member you have power...power to take charge of your profession...power to change policy...power to negotiate your contract. But it is hard to do these alone. The MEA works with educators to defend public education as the cornerstone of our democracy.

24,000 Strong - One Voice

As a member of an organization with more than 24,000 members, of which 3,500 represent higher education, our power comes with strength in numbers. We are stronger advocates for public education if we stand together with one voice, for every student. MEA members participate in Lobby Days each year to show their pride in public education and lobby legislators for everything from education funding to faculty and staff wages. Lobby Days show legislators that our members are willing to speak up for their profession and have an active role in shaping the future of the public education system in the state.

Have a Say in Legislation that Affects You

Lawmakers in Augusta have a direct impact on public education and as a member you can as well, voicing your opinion on:

- Public Education Funding
- Education Policy
- Faculty Governance
- Academic Freedom

The MEA works to make sure each policy and rule that will impact your profession is written in the best way possible to help you, the member.

Our voice in these issues needs to be loud and it needs to be strong. By becoming active and staying engaged in the Association we can help build the kind of public education system we want to work in each and every day.

MEA community college members gather in Augusta to talk to their legislators aided by the MEA Government Relations Department.
Protecting Your Professional Rights

If not for the MEA and its work, educators would not have collective bargaining. Collective bargaining is a process of negotiations between employers and a group of employees to reach an agreement which makes working conditions safe and fair. Your local Association leaders, who are members on your campuses, can answer questions, provide assistance and connect you with the Association resources you need. Local leaders work with 16 MEA regional UniServ Directors to protect your contract. A UniServ Director is a trained advocate in handling personnel issues, negotiations, contract maintenance and community organizing. Behind the UniServ Directors are the combined resources of the MEA and NEA. Together, we protect our combined interests.

Right to Representation—Weingarten Rights
As an MEA member you have the right to be represented by the Association in any matter that may result in discipline or termination. Representation, which is only available to members, gives you guidance in a difficult time.

Right to Grieve
As an MEA member, if your contractual or legal rights have been violated you may have the right to grieve the matter. Grievances, when won, can result in things like back pay or reinstatement if you were let go. If you think your contract rights have been violated, you can reach out to your local Association leader or your UniServ Director.

Right to “Just Cause”
MEA contracts contain provisions requiring community college or university systems to have “just cause” before disciplining or terminating an employee. “Just cause” language provides further protection from improper management action against an employee.
What Benefits Come with Membership?

The MEA provides benefits that affect nearly every area of your life, from your health insurance and liability insurance to programs to help you pay your student loans. These benefits can save you thousands of dollars while providing you a safety net if you get sick or need legal services.

**Determine your compensation and working conditions:**
- Vote for and hold Association office
- Serve on the negotiations team
- Develop the bargaining proposal
- Receive bargaining updates
- Vote on contract ratification

**Represent employee interests through the Association:**
- Vote on policy and programs
- Develop positions on issues
- Determine which grievances go to arbitration
- Serve as the sole voice for faculty or staff in all employment matters

**Protect yourself and your family:**
- $1 million professional liability insurance for employment-related matters
- Legal defense against employment-related criminal charges
- Support for civil rights claims
- Assistance for disability retirement claims
- Assistance for unemployment compensation appeals
- Lobbying by MEA/NEA provides the legislative influence higher education needs in the state legislature and before the U.S. Congress.

**MEA Legal Services**
Legal protections are available to members with many workplace concerns including:
- Counsel for disability claims
- Representation in overtime or wage and hour claims
- Aggressive advocacy regarding your rights on the job
- Questions regarding retirement benefits

To see how member benefits outnumber non-member benefits 20 to 1 please see the back of this booklet.
Beyond benefits to improve your life and health, being an MEA member offers you many day-to-day benefits that will save you money.

**Do you like to ski or snowboard?** Members can receive up to 20% off lift tickets at major mountains in Maine.

**If not skiing…what about golf?** Members can save up to $20 on the Golf Privilege Card which provides the best golf value in Maine.

**How about movie tickets?** Throughout the year the NEA offers discounts, sometimes $4 off per ticket!

**Dining out?** Eat up at some of the best restaurants in the state! Members can often find deals where if you spend, as little as, $4 you get a $25 gift certificate. The discounts are found through the NEA Click and Save Program. As a member of the MEA, you are eligible for all NEA discounts. Log on to: www.neamb.com.

**TicketsAtWork**
TicketsAtWork offers discounts on shows, events and amusement parks across the country including New York, Las Vegas and Disney. Go to www.ticketsatwork.com.

**Shop ’til You Drop**

Here are just a few of the Click and Save companies:

**Everyday Living:**
- NEA Wireless - AT&T
- H&R Block
- Whirlpool VIP Program
- NEA ID Theft Protection
- NEA Auto Purchase Advantage
- NEA Moving & Storage Discount Program

**Health & Wellness**
- NEA Hearing Care Program
- NEA Vision & Prescription Nutrisystem Success

**Cash Rewards Credit Cards**
Members have the option to sign up for three different NEA credit cards all of which offer valuable rewards ranging from low interest rates to cash back.
1) All employees in a bargaining unit are covered by the terms of the Association’s negotiated contract, but that is all non-members receive. The following rights, services, and benefits apply ONLY to Association members.

**Determine your compensation and working conditions:**
- 2) Vote for and hold Association office
- 3) Serve on the negotiations team
- 4) Develop the bargaining proposal
- 5) Receive bargaining updates
- 6) Vote on contract ratification

**Represent employee interests through the Association:**
- 7) Vote on policy and programs
- 8) Develop positions on issues
- 9) Determine which grievances go to arbitration
- 10) Serve as the sole voice for faculty or staff in all employment matters

**Protect yourself and your family:**
- 11) $1 million professional liability insurance for employment-related matters
- 12) Legal defense against employment-related criminal charges
- 13) Support for civil rights claims
- 14) Assistance for disability retirement claims
- 15) Assistance for unemployment compensation appeals
- 16) Lobbying by MEA/NEA provides the legislative influence higher education needs in the state legislature and before the U.S. Congress.

17) Research by MEA/NEA supports negotiations with NEA’s Annual Faculty Research Review, NEA College and University Data System, and the NEA Higher Education Contract Analysis System.

18) Professional resources through MEA/NEA include workshops at regional and national conferences, NEA’s Higher Education website (www.nea.org/he), NEA Higher Education Advocate newsletter, and “Thought & Action” an almanac of higher education and professional resources online.

19) Consumer Benefits provide discounts on auto and homeowners’ insurance, life insurance, AD&D insurance, long-term care insurance, income protection, loans and mortgages, credit cards, savings and investment, car rental, wireless phones, magazine subscriptions, and travel.

20) Information on local, state, and national events important to education employees communicated through newsletters, a monthly newspaper, magazine, electronic newsletters, and the web.