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2nd Vice President..... Tracie Yostpile
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President's Message by Denise King



Dear MCEA Members, I cannot believe that this MCEA leadership team has been in office for four years. Time really does fly! In that time, we moved our office into a more suitable space, utilized PRIDE in Public Education grants to strengthen our county local and engage with the community. We have increased the amount of Professional Development/ Advocacy Trainings we offer and through these offerings have been able to meet many of our members. Through our Monmouth County Legislative Action Team we have helped get pro-education candidates elected, a Monmouth County resident elected governor and a Monmouth County Commissioner of Education appointed. We also updated the MCEA By-laws/Constitution. We added Policies and Procedures to run our association efficiently. We continue to work along with NJEA to support our 14,000 members.

The MCEA Overnight has been a huge success over the last couple of years. The number of members in attendance has doubled! Members have enjoyed the Ocean Place Resort and Spa Hotel in Long Branch while meeting new friends from Middlesex County Educational Association. We are in the process of planning another wonderful Overnight Conference for next year.

We continue to support our Educational Support Personnel. Many ESP have attended workshops and events, which are specifically designed to help them within their work category. This year our Monmouth County Educational Support Person of the Year is Mary O'Keefe. Mary O'Keefe has been a teacher assistant in the Freehold Township School District for the last 9 years. She is actively involved in her local association, MCEA, and her community. Congratulations to Mary!

Your MCEA leadership team is always looking forward. We are looking forward to offering you more opportunities to join us at events and workshops to help you in your professional and personal life. I would like to thank all of you for your continued support of this team by electing us for another two-year term. I wish you all a wonderful and restful summer. I look forward to seeing you in the fall!

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Denise King, MCEA President, and Tracie Yostpile, MCEA 2nd Vice President, congratulate Mary O'Keefe, the Monmouth County Educational Support Person of the Year.

Upcoming MCEA Events

- Friends of Education Awards Dinner: May 31- IPlay America
Asbury Park Pride Parade: June 3- Asbury Park
NEA/RA Conference: June 28-July 5- Minneapolis
NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership: August 4-10- Atlantic City

# MCEA Members Enjoy Professional Development Workshops

by Tracie Yostpile



Another successful school year filled with Monmouth County Education Association professional development offerings is coming to a close. Your MCEA leadership team was so happy to meet the many members who took advantage of what was available and attend our professional development workshops. We are always trying to expand what we offer to you both professionally and personally. This year we even had two of our members conduct a very successful STEM in the Foreign Language setting for our teachers of foreign language. Next year these women promise to come back and hold a Center and Station Teaching for the

Foreign Language Educator Workshop. If there are any professional development sessions you think you can offer to our members, please let us know. We are looking to develop a workshop session specific to our school nurse population.

We have developed our workshop offerings for the 2018-2019 school year, as well as a plan for our MCEA Overnight Conference. Our goal for our workshops is to feed you and offer free professional and personal development to all our members, both certified professionals and educational support professionals. So if you have yet to take advantage of one of our events, please put it on the "To Do" list for next school year. You will not be sorry.

## Pride Events Continue to be Successful

by Diane Vistein

At this time I would like to extend a special "Thank You" to those MCEA members who braved the elements and marched in the Belmar St. Patrick's Day Parade. Members received a fleece jacket and embroidered MCEA scarf. A good time was had by all.

Upcoming PRIDE events will include a Dyslexia Informational Workshop being presented at iPlay America. Parents and members throughout the county will attend for an evening of information, conversation, pizza and desserts.

The 4th annual Friends of Education Awards Dinner will be held on May 31, 2018 at iPlay America. This year sixteen recipients will be honored for their dedication

to public school students in Monmouth County. We are proud to announce this year's Presidents Award recipient will be Tom Falocco.

This celebratory event has grown and the MCEA has invited student participation throughout the evening. Floral arrangements will be created by MCVOC students, the Navy-JROTC color guard will present colors and participate in the opening ceremony, and the Stardust Chorus from Freehold Township has been chosen to entertain guests.

Please remember to check your MCEA calendar, and the MCEA website for upcoming events.

Have a safe summer!



MCEA members marched in the Belmar St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 4, 2018.

# Monmouth County Delegates Will Attend the NEA RA Convention

by Vicki McKeon



Here it is; the end of May. While many of you are looking forward to a little rest and relaxation, or switching to your summer employment, I am again looking forward to attending the National Education Association Representative Assembly (NEA RA). This year I will be traveling to Minneapolis, Minnesota along with seventeen other

Monmouth County delegates and the New Jersey contingent of about five hundred. There, we will be part of the roughly eight thousand delegates representing state and local affiliates from across the country. These delegates are all elected by their local or state Associations and represent teachers and support professionals, as well as student members, retired members, and other segments of the united education profession.

The NEA RA is held each year at the end of June and/or the beginning of July. This year the RA runs from June 30th through July 5th. The New Jersey delegation will meet on June 30th and July 1st and registration is held during these two days, as well as pre-RA meetings, conferences, and exhibits. The eight business sessions of the RA will take place from July 2nd through July 5th. During these business sessions, we will adopt the strategic plan and budget, resolutions, the legislative program, and other policies of the NEA. This body is the primary legislative and policy making body of the NEA and will set policy and chart the direction of NEA business. Delegates may propose new business items (NBIs) that are then debated on the floor. There are usually around one hundred NBIs proposed each year. Action is taken on the NBIs following debate.

The NEA Representative Assembly is the largest democratic deliberative assembly in the world. I am always amazed by the size of the delegation, the eight business meetings, and the entire process by which the new business items are proposed, debated, amended, and voted on. This will be my eleventh NEA RA, and I am truly looking forward to attending. It is a lot of work. The days are long and tiring, but at the same time it is exhilarating and gratifying. It is an honor to be elected by your local or state affiliation and to be entrusted with the task of making the best decisions for our members. In addition to setting policy, delegates vote by secret ballot on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws, and elect the executive officers, executive committee members, and at-large members to the NEA

Board of Directors.

Monmouth County can send nearly fifty delegates to the NEA RA. If you have never attended and think that this is something that you would like to do, check with your local association for a chance to attend as a local delegate or get on the ballot next February to run as a state delegate. Next year the RA will be held in Houston, Texas and in 2020 the meeting will be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Do you want to follow the proceedings of this year's RA? Go to the NEA website starting July 2nd to find the latest RA news, election results, or to access the floor items. You can also follow the RA happenings on Twitter or Facebook.

## MCEA Leadership Team Re-Elected

by John Napolitani, Sr.



Dear Colleagues,

It has been a truly exciting year for all of us who represent you from the MCEA. We have successfully continued our President's Roundtable quarterly, our Collective Bargaining Council quarterly and have added the Optical Academy quarterly as well. These have truly been successful events for the leaders of your locals as well as the membership. It is our hope to continue these throughout the following school year as we begin to plan out our calendar.

I want to thank the membership for their support over the years as our team has been "re-elected" for another term this past April. This will allow the MCEA leadership team to stay in place and continue the work we began several years ago. Our team continues to look for ways to improve our services and give the support to our local leadership and membership with new and innovative ideas. We will continue the hard work you have entrusted in us as your leadership team.

In closing, we look forward to a restful summer where we can recharge our batteries and begin to prepare for another challenging year ahead. Please know that our team will continue our hard work over the summer for the betterment of the entire MCEA. Please have a safe, restful, and enjoyable summer break.

# Legislators Share Educational Concerns at Legislative Action Team Dinner

by Daniel Rodrick



This year's Legislative Dinner was well attended by both members and elected officials. Our Legislative panel consisted of both Democrats and Republicans. We were delighted to host Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling, Assemblywoman JoAnn Downey, Assemblywoman Serena DiMaso, Assemblyman Ron Dancer, Assemblyman Rob Clifton,

Assemblyman Sean Kean and State Senator Sam Thompson. We appreciate them taking time out of their busy schedules to interact with fellow members and answer their questions. Most members in attendance are still concerned about the impact Chapter 78 is having on take home pay. In response, all Legislative panelists stated that they would be willing to work with the Association to try and provide some relief from Chapter 78.

In the news, a showdown is brewing between Democrats over the Governor's budget. Governor Murphy is proposing raising the sales tax to 7% from its current rate of 6.625%. In addition, Murphy's budget calls for a Millionaires tax, and a tax on Uber, Lyft and Airbnb.

Murphy says that the 1.5 billion dollar revenue increase will be used to provide funding for education, expand public preschool, and sure up the public pension system. He is also proposing increasing funding for transportation and New Jersey Transit. State Senate President Steve Sweeney opposes the sales tax increase and Murphy's plan for free college. Negotiations are underway, so keep your eye out for updates from the Association.



Mary O'Keefe, Denise King, Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling, Assemblywoman JoAnn Downey, and Dan Rodrick share educational concerns at the MCEA Legislative Action Team Dinner April 25 at the DoubleTree in Tinton Falls.



The President of the NJEA, Marie Blistan, was one of the keynote speakers at the MCEA Legislative Action Team Dinner April 25.

## Membership As A Retiree

You are currently part of a very important group of active educators and/or support staff. You are a unified member of NEA, NJEA, MCEA, and your local with all the benefits and protection that goes with it. When you retire, you will have the opportunity to retain all these benefits and protection by joining the **New Jersey Retired Educators Association**. You will also be unified with the NEA Retired, NJREA, and your county organization, **MCREA**. Some of the benefits are:

- Updates on current pension, benefits, and legislative issues
- Professional assistance with medical benefits and pension questions
- Quarterly publications
- Discounted legal services
- Buyer's Edge
- NJEA Travel
- NEA insurance and financial programs
- And more

In addition, you will have opportunities to meet with other Monmouth County Retirees four times a year for informational luncheons, participate in local philanthropic endeavors, and community outreach.

You do not have to wait until you retire to join. To get more information or apply, please visit the Retiree Member Section at NJEA.org. I can also help with questions.

*Kathy Hodecker, President  
Monmouth County Retired Educators Association  
compteacher@hotmail.com.*