



MADISON TEACHERS INC.

Meet the Candidates for MTI

Board of Directors, Cabinet on Personnel, Finance & Political Action Committees - 2019

The members of MTI elect the leaders of their Union. The following biographical sketches are provided to assist in determining your leadership. Nominations for the positions were finalized at the September 17 meeting of the MTI Faculty Representative Council. Election by MTI Faculty Representatives will be held at the October 15 Council meeting. If you have comments to share, please share with your school Faculty Representative(s).

MTI Board of Directors

Kira Fobbs (incumbent, Seat 1) - Kira is a REACH teacher at Falk Elementary School and has taught in the MMSD since 1996. She has a BA Political Science, IMA Political Anthropology, MS Curriculum and Instruction: Multicultural Education. She has served as a Faculty Representative, WEAC Delegate, member of the MTI Board of Directors, and is Co-Chair of the Equity & Diversity Committee. She is a Founding Member of the Black Educators Network of Madison and plays percussion in a local activist street band - Forward! Which was formed during the protests of 2011 against Act 10.

Statement: I come from a union family where my father was a union steward his entire career. I was raised as an activist and have followed in the footsteps of Saul Alinsky and his Rules for Radicals; and Frederick Douglass "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will..." I will never stop fighting for Justice and what we deserve!

Amanda Pustz (Seat 1) – Amanda is a Social Studies teacher at East High School and has taught in the MMSD since 1997. She has a Bachelor of Arts in History with a Women’s Studies Concentration from Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and a Master of Arts in Exceptional Education from Edgewood College in Madison. She taught one year as a substitute teacher; 14 years at Cherokee Middle School as a Cross Categorical Teacher; two years at Spring Harbor Middle School as a Cross Categorical Teacher focusing on reading intervention, and she is starting the 6th year at East High School as a Social Studies Teacher (U.S. History 9 and Women’s Studies).

MTI member since the fall of 1997; MTI Action Committee that worked on a successful campaign for class size recommendations especially for district elementary schools; a Faculty Representative from East High School; and member of the Handbook Planning Time Committee.

Neighborhood Team Leader with the Democratic Party and various campaigns, including Obama, Clinton, Baldwin, Feingold, Barrett, Evers, Pocan, and smaller races. Developed political strategies to meet established goals. Led volunteers to implement a variety of tactics, including voter contact activities like making phone calls and going door-to-door. Reported data and created voter lists from given computer programs and databases. Mentored other volunteers in developing and leading a team of their own. Trained in community and issue organizing.

Campaign manager for local school board races. Responsible for creating and implementing successful campaign plan, including planning for events (kick-offs, fundraisers, victory parties, meet and greets, etc.), media responses (questionnaires, responding to reporters and events, forums, speeches, letters to the editor, etc.), voter contact strategies (targeting, canvassing, texting, mailers, social media, etc.), and coordinated and led team members and volunteers.

Statement: Teachers are hurting. They are hurting across the country, across the state and definitely across MMSD. So many teachers talk about how they are working harder than ever before as they are being asked to do more and more with less and less. We have all felt the long term effects of the attacks on the teaching profession and on

public education, generally. Certainly, the loss of collective bargaining under Act 10 has fundamentally changed our profession and our union, making it more challenging for both school staff and our union. Yet, the need to advocacy for educators is greater than ever. Teachers and other school staff desperately need to know that our union, their union is fighting for them, is standing up for them, is on their side. I would like to be a part of the next great phase of MTI, one in which it is known for its fierce advocacy for school staff, for leading by example for other unions across the state and across the country, for being part of returning the respect and rights all school staff need and deserve.

My unique background within the school district and my experience outside of the profession make me an ideal candidate to sit on MTI's Board of Directors. I have held both regular education and special education positions within the school district as well as worked at both the middle and high school level. This allows me to have a greater understanding of the various perspectives and needs within the district. Outside of the school setting, I have spent more than a decade politically organizing for various campaigns including running local school board races. My training in electoral, community and issue level organizing, and my experiences would be incredibly valuable as I can help the union move forward using solid political strategies and essential relationship building necessary for successful action.

Amy Turkowski (incumbent, Seat 2) – Amy is a First Grade teacher at Franklin Elementary School and has been teaching since 2005. This is her fifteenth year in education. She earned an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in elementary education and a master's degree in reading from Concordia University Wisconsin. She has served as a Faculty Representative, MTI Bargaining/Handbook Committee member, member of the MTI Board of Directors, MTI Summer Membership Organizer, MTI Membership Committee Chair, MTI Social Media Committee member, and various MTI/MMSD Salary/Compensation Committees. Amy was active this summer advocating for the full 2.44% cost-of-living base-wage increase for all MMSD employees. She attended and spoke before the School Board several times and served on the core planning team as an Organizing Activist. Amy is outgoing, playful, and loves to make people laugh.

Being a part of my union has been an easy decision for me. I was union-raised. My father was a proud member of the Teamsters Local 43 for nearly thirty-three years. He was a steward for thirty of those years where he participated in labor contract negotiations with Teamster representatives and company lawyers. My mother was actively involved in UWA local 1877 for nine years, where she served as chief steward and vice president. My family makes me strong. My union makes me strong. I am standing on the shoulders of those strong labor leaders of the past. I love labor organizing and talking to potential members about the value of union membership. My role as a Summer Organizer lead me on the path toward the MTI Board of Directors. I am eager for the challenges that await us. I am energized by our collective potential. I am because we are.

MTI Cabinet on Personnel

Alexandra (Xanda) Fayen (incumbent, Seat 1) – Xanda is a Social Worker at Capital High West & SAPAR and has taught in the MMSD since 2001. I went to an alternative high school in New Haven, CT. It was a big part of what made me want to be in education and an even bigger part of why I wanted to be in alternative programming. I became a mom when I was 19 so when I went to UW-Madison, I was an older student. My undergraduate degree is in Women's Studies and Social Work and I have a Master's in Social Work. I am part of the Wisconsin School Social Work Association; I have been a Faculty Rep since 2011 and worked hard on the recall efforts as well as several school board elections. I am going into my second year as a SCFL delegate. Between 2012 and 2014 I became a grandmother to two young boys and a caregiver for my elderly mom. This slowed me down a bit in terms of political activity, but things are a bit calmer now, so I am trying to refocus myself on union involvement. This past summer I was lucky enough to be one of the summer organizers for MTI and I had a great experience.

Statement: As a social worker, I have been involved in a fair number of hiring decisions as well as have provided assistance to many colleagues who struggled with various aspects of their professional role and/or experienced mental health symptoms that affected work or had their symptoms exacerbated by various aspects of working in education. I have not worked directly in human resources, but I have a strong belief in fairness, compassion and professional integrity. I want MTI staff to work in a positive environment that supports their ability to manage the

stress that comes along with supporting our profession. I want them to have benefits and vacation that help them sustain their work and overall life happiness.

Amy Noble (incumbent, Seat 2) – Amy is a School Social Worker assigned to the Memorial attendance area. Amy has worked in MMSD since 2001. She has served several years as a Faculty Representative at Doyle, a member of the Cabinet on Personnel, and member of the MTI Cares Board. She has a background as a Human Resources manager prior to earning her MSW and beginning to work in schools in 1994.

Statement: When John Matthews asked if I would be willing to be nominated for the Cabinet on Personnel, I thought he had some deep magic way of knowing my history. Turns out he just thought I would be a good fit and had no idea I had previously been a Human Resources manager. I have been honored to be a part of this work and would be equally honored to continue. While not a group that meets often, the decisions related to MTI staffing are critically important to the overall wellbeing of our Union. My observations of this work over the years have consistently confirmed that we hold our solidarity and unity of purpose at the center. As a side note, MTI members should know that in every aspect, the integrity, professionalism, and compassion that Executive Director Doug Keillor applies to this work is exemplary.

MTI Finance Committee

Bruce Bobb (incumbent, Seat 1) – Bruce is a Grade 6 Social Studies teacher at Spring Harbor Middle School and has taught in MMSD since 1998. He previously taught at Lapham, Shabazz and Hoyt. Bruce has served on the MTI Finance Committee since 2011.

Holly Hansen (incumbent, Seat 2) – Holly is an Early Childhood teacher at Lapham and has taught in MMSD since 1998. She has served as a Faculty Representative, is chair of the Cabinet on Personnel, and serves on the Finance, Bargaining Handbook Review, Salary, Special Education, and Nominations & Elections Committees.

Melina Lozano (incumbent, Seat 3) – Melina is a Bilingual Resource teacher at Hawthorne Elementary and has taught in MMSD since 2012. She is a Faculty Representative, Summer Member Organizer, and was elected to the Finance Committee last year.

MTI Voters Political Action Committee

Darlinne Kambwa-Bell (incumbent, Seat 1) – Darlinne is a Program Support Teacher (Special Ed) at Doyle and has taught in MMSD since 2014 when hired as a Cross Categorical teacher at Mendota Elementary. She was elected to MTI Voters PAC in 2018.

Susan Stern (incumbent, Seat 2) – Susan is a Bilingual Resource Teacher at Shorewood Elementary and has taught in MMSD since 2000. She has served as a Faculty Representative, Membership Organizer, and Bargaining Handbook, Political Action, Member Action, and Salary Committees.

Natasha Sullivan (incumbent, Seat 3) – Natasha is an English teacher at Lafollette High School and has taught in MMSD since 2011. She received an English and Secondary (bachelors) from UW-Madison and is currently enrolled at UW-Madison for Education Leadership and Social Justice (MA). Natasha serves on the MTI Political Action Committee, MTI Social Media Committee, MTI Communications Committee, MTI Diversity and Equity Committee, and as an MTI Faculty Rep.

Statement: It has been a pleasure to serve MTI as a member of several committees over the past year. My family comes from a long tradition of unions, starting with my biological father who started the first Latinx union at the Janesville General Motors plant and my father who is a police officer with Kenosha County. At UW Madison, I started my advocacy in student organizations and have kept politically active ever since. I was student teaching during the

2011 protests surrounding Act 10 and the feeling of unity and hope I felt in those moments has stayed with me ever since. As a queer, Latinx woman, I have taken a strong stance in our community and our union to protect our most vulnerable students and I feel that the intersection of my identities has helped me view the issues with a unique lens. I have been a member of MTI for 8 years and after having two children, decided to devote more time to giving back to my union. While I am on several committees, PAC is dear to my heart and a duty that I take very seriously. In the past year, I have not only served on the committee, but followed up on our commitments by regularly attending board meetings and maintaining contact with our school board members to make sure they are adhering to the promised they made during their campaigns. I believe strongly in the power of our collective voice and have devoted myself to working for the union that has worked so hard for us all. It would be a pleasure and an honor to serve another term on the committee. Thank you for allowing me to work for you and I would love to have your vote and support for Political Action Committee Seat 3!

John Rademacher (Seat 4) – John is a Biology teacher and Forensics Coach at West High School and has taught in MMSD since 1998. He received a B.S., Psychology, UW-Madison; M.S., Preventive Medicine-Epidemiology, UW-Madison; and Teaching License: Biology, Chemistry, Health Education, Broad Field Science. John is President, Wisconsin Forensic Coaches' Association and Wisconsin District Chair, National Speech & Debate Association.

Statement: I've been politically active since I was old enough to vote, and I never miss an election. I have been actively involved in local campaigns and elections. I will do the research it takes to make highly-informed decisions about candidates who will act in the collective best interests of my union sisters and brothers. I will be fully prepared for the endorsement interviews. We all know that elections matter, but MTI endorsements matter, especially in local elections. I will work and encourage all MTI-endorsed candidates to follow through on campaign promises.