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# Solidarity!

## Board President Winston Faces a Barrage of Questions During Interview: He Wants Your Health Insurance

On January 16, **MTI VOTERS**, MTI's Political Action Committee, interviewed all seven candidates for the **Madison School Board in this spring's election**, as well as candidates for **Mayor and Supreme Court**. The first interview was with School Board President Johnny Winston.

It took a barrage of questions from **MTI Executive Director** Matthews and the elected members of **MTI VOTERS** to get School Board President **Johnny Winston to explain that the Board's bargaining proposals will wither away the MTI negotiated health insurance**, as provided under MTI's various contracts with the District. Under pressure, Winston finally said a potential "savings of \$2 million could be gained under the District's proposal (to drop WPS and replace it with three HMOs) and could then be used elsewhere in the District's budget."

*Committee members stressed that they have given up much in wage increases over the years in order to maintain high quality health insurance as well as other benefits which provide economic security to their families, and they are not willing to give up what they have fought to keep for so many years. Matthews added that cheaper coverage meant reduced benefits or more employee co-pays and that meant paying for health care services with after tax dollars or not having coverage for services that are now covered. Winston had no response.*

Winston was later asked what he would do about the larger funding problems for schools caused by the State-imposed revenue controls and what he would do to rectify them. He was encouraged to use his position as Board President to aggressively advocate for the schools, rather than engage in regressive bargaining.

MTI VOTERS' recommendations for endorsement will be distributed, along with ballots, on January 29. The primary election is February 20 and the general election is April 3. **The latter occurs during the MMSD spring break. As a result, MTI will implement a plan to assist members in obtaining absentee ballots.**

## It's Your Health and Your Life: Freedom to Choose is Most Important

*Choosing a physician is one of the most important decisions a person makes*, whether one is selecting a general practitioner, an internist, a pediatrician, or another specialist such as a gynecologist, a cardiologist or an oncologist. One wants to choose a physician who is recognized as the best in their field. Each of us wants the highest quality care available whether it is for us or a loved one.

A previous issue of ***MTI Solidarity!*** discussed the difference in access to health care providers available from HMOs (Health Maintenance Organizations) and PPOs (Preferred Provider Organizations). Be sure to understand the difference. Each of MTI's contracts with the District offers options. These options enable one to choose GHC, an HMO which operates at lower cost because they restrict one's choice of physicians to those employed by GHC, or WPS, under which one can choose any physician within their preferred provider (PPO) statewide network.

Under GHC, every family member is required to have a primary care physician and obtain referrals to consult with a specialist to receive a second opinion. HMOs cost less by restricting access and controlling access to specialists. It is no different than buying a car. One with more options and higher quality costs more.

Each year, **Madison Magazine** publishes a list of the area's best physicians, as nominated by their peers. ***MTI suggests that members keep this "Top Doctors" list available for reference. It will likely come in handy when Board President Johnny Winston pushes his plan to remove MTI members' freedom of choice in choosing health care providers.*** To save money, he wants to limit your access rather than fight the Governor to remove revenue controls. **Winston wants to use the money you now have available for health care, at your option, to pay the District's heating bills or other expenses.**

MTI's PPO plan via WPS provides access to **all** eleven (11) **Madison Magazine** top doctors in the "Family Medicine" category. In contrast, only two (2) of those physicians are available as part of the HMO option. As regards internists, the WPS PPO plan would provide access to any of the nine (9) physicians on the list; none are covered by the HMO option. WPS' PPO plan provides access to any of **Madison Magazine's** nine (9) top-rated pediatricians.

Currently, MTI bargaining unit members have access to the best health care providers available. But, Winston and his cohorts want to take this privilege away. Your Union is working hard to ensure that you continue to have the freedom to choose from the top rated physicians. ***MTI Solidarity!*** will continue to keep members informed about this important topic.

In the last several MTI bargaining surveys, MTI members have rated as their highest priority the continuance of WPS health insurance. The other options in the area - DeanCare, Unity and Physicians Plus all have restricted access panels as does GHC, i.e. MTI's contracts already provide access to an HMO for those who prefer that option.

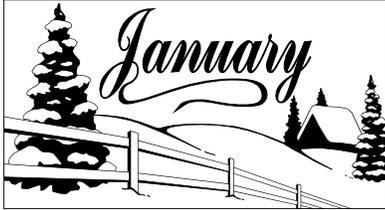
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### ***Our Union Makes Us Strong!***

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MTI's web page - [www.madisonteachers.org](http://www.madisonteachers.org)

MTI's email - [MTI@madisonteachers.org](mailto:MTI@madisonteachers.org)



## Upcoming Meetings/Events

Thursday, January 25, 4:30 p.m.	SEE-MTI Negotiations at MMSD
Tuesday, January 30, 4:00 p.m.	MTI Special Education Sub-Committee at MTI
Wednesday, January 31, 4:00 p.m.	SSA-MTI General Membership at MTI
Thursday, February 1, 4:30 p.m.	SEE-MTI Board of Directors at MTI
Tuesday, February 6, 4:15 p.m.	MTI Bargaining Committee at MTI

## Important February & March Deadlines:

Many dates of importance occur in February. **Salary Advancement Credit** for passage over a salary barrier or for salary track advancement, effective with the beginning of the second semester, are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 1**.

**Sabbatical Leave** applications for either the first semester of the 2007-08 school year or for the entire school year are due in the MTI Office by 5:00 p.m., **February 1**.

**Retirement & Teacher Emeritus Retirement Program** enrollment applications are due in the office of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m., **February 15**.

**Part-time Contract Reduction** enables *full-time* teachers who wish to work part-time to do so for a period of one year and have the right to return to full-time regular employment commencing with the subsequent school year. **Requests for part-time contracts must be made in writing to Human Resources on or before March 1 for the 2007-08 school year.**

## With Your Support and Unprecedented Solidarity, Striking Steel Workers at Goodyear Tire Obtain a "Just" Contract Settlement

The three month struggle by more than 15,000 striking United Steel Workers' members against the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company has resulted in a new three year contract. Said victory was made possible by the solidarity demonstrated by MTI members, the South Central Federation of Labor, the AFL-CIO, the entire labor movement, and community groups across the nation. United Steel Workers International President Leo W. Gerard stated,

*"This agreement validates the solidarity of our members and their families, who wouldn't allow the company to walk away from obligations earned through a lifetime of hard work and loyalty. We owe a debt of gratitude to the entire labor and activist communities which rose with unprecedented solidarity to challenge Goodyear's assault on our members. The credit really belongs to our members and their families whose solidarity prevented the company from short-changing them, despite all of its attempts. Special thanks go out again to all of our AFL-CIO union affiliates, activist groups, community organizations, businesses and public officials who not only understood our struggle, but stood shoulder-to-shoulder with us. It took a strike, but we achieved a fair and equitable contract that protects quality health care for active and retired members."*

The new contract at Goodyear Tire and Rubber was

approved by more than a two to one margin with over 10,000 members casting ballots.

## Foundation's School Endowment Campaign Reaches Major Milestones

This year has seen **the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools reach two big milestones** in its first-in-the-nation drive to create an endowment for each Madison school that will yield "interest" for grant-making by each school every year, forever.

First, all 47 schools that were offered a \$5,000 challenge gift in 2003 from local philanthropists John and Leslie Taylor and the Madison-based Clay-Price Fund have now exceeded the \$10,000 needed to establish their endowment. Of these, 12 schools now have endowments exceeding \$25,000 and two of the 12 have broken the \$50,000 mark.

Second, with a new \$90,000 challenge gift from the Madison Community Foundation, this school endowment initiative has gone over the \$1 million mark in funds raised. This new gift will provide 50 cents in match for each of the first \$3,750 raised from all sources for each school's endowment. If the challenge is fully met, this will result in over \$5,600 added to each endowment.

This fall, **21 schools made grants from their endowment fund, ranging from \$100 up to a high of \$2,849 and totaling just over \$16,500.** These are in addition to roughly \$64,000 in grants made in 2006 from the Foundation's other donor-designated funds and its annual unrestricted fund grants competition, and the amount will continue to grow as each endowment grows.

Our next chance to grow these endowments and take advantage of the Madison Community Foundation challenge, comes up later this month when the 7th annual employee giving campaign gets underway.

## Visitation Day

MTI's Teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement grants **each teacher one visitation day** per school year to observe instructional practices in other schools. The visitation day must be **utilized by April 23** of a given school year. The teacher's request for a visitation day is to be submitted to the principal of their school for approval. A visitation day can also be recommended by a principal. Teachers using the negotiated visitation day are reimbursed for expenses if the visitation day for the teacher is at the request of a principal.