

2015 Annual Meeting Agenda

Attendees: Natalie Higgins (PHENOM Staff), Ernesto Guerrero (Student, QCC), Alex Nally (PHENOM Board, Student, MassArt), Ferd Wulkan (PHENOM Staff), Clare Hammonds (Faculty, UMA), Juhi Dasrath (Student, STCC), James Perry (Grad Student, UMD), Naka Ishii (Librarian, UMA), Ben Taylor (PHENOM Staff), Max Page (PHENOM Board, Faculty, UMA), Kim Selwitz, PHENOM Board, Framingham State Alum), Neil MacInnes-Barker (IPCNOW, UMB Alum), Carl Ericson (PHENOM Board, Staff, UMA), Dale Labonte (Librarian, QCC), Ken Haar (PHENOM Board, Retired Faculty, Westfield State), Penelope Herideen (Faculty, HCC)

Lunch | Reconnect | Network | Intros/Name Icebreaker

Small group activity

- Why are you a member of PHENOM?
 - Solidarity with all parts of the higher ed system
 - Best (only) game (statewide network, quality, free) in town
 - thinks outside the box -- DRAMA & STRATEGY
 - Multi-everything -- like a special salad
 - Building solidarity
 - Debt
 - Improving Access
 - Alumni
 - Current Students
 - Free Accessible Higher Ed & Healthcare
 - Recognition
- What are your main priority issues?
 - improving access to education
 - make it possible for more people to access higher education
 - increasing funding to higher ed
 - student debt/free higher ed
 - 1st generation student struggles
 - strengthen campus chapters
 - make things visible
 - fundraising
 - strengthen relationship with MTA
 - Affordability
 - Legislative Buy-in
 - Coalition building
 - The 99%
 - Queer Students
 - Immigrant Students
 - Students of Color

- How can we build out the PHENOM network together? What other groups (or individuals) are you connected with that PHENOM should reach out to?
 - recruitment of students
 - work networks
 - student clubs
 - High School Guidance
 - AFL-CIO / Labor Councils
 - Find individuals on campus (activists, esp. faculty and staff)
 - Alums (UMA Alumni Association)
 - Student Advisory Council to Board of Higher Education
 - Student Affairs Networks
 - Staff & Faculty Unions
 - Student Government Associations
 - Business leaders and Legislators with Public Higher Ed Backgrounds
 - MASSPIRG
 - Neighbor 2 Neighbor

Reflection on the past year (Natalie) including Chapter Organizing Updates & Next Targets, Upcoming events: Congressman McGovern Affordability Event, Access Conference, Raise Up Mass Fair Share Tax Campaign

FROM Natalie: *I have had a PHENOMenal time since I started back in August 2014. I wanted to take a moment and thank all of you for your fantastic work, in what has been a really fabulous year for PHENOM. And this is truly an awesome time to be advocating for college affordability and access with President Obama's call for Free Community College, and Presidential Candidate Bernie Sanders proposing free two years across all segments of public higher ed.*

One of the biggest highlights of the year has been refocusing on building Campus Chapters across the state. This was made possible with a \$50,000 grant from the Mass Teachers Association. As of Spring 2015 we had five active Chapters as of Spring 2015 -- Springfield Technical Community College, Holyoke Community College, Bristol Community College, UMass Amherst, and UMass Dartmouth (separate funding). We are in talks with groups or individuals at UMass Boston, Westfield State, Quinsigamond Community College, Fitchburg State, Worcester State, Salem State, and Bunker Hill Community College for Fall 2015.

We also have focused on expanding our partnerships with other community-based organizations, like Mass Jobs with Justice, MASSPIRG, and the Student Immigrant Movement. At the same time, collaborating with great allies on the campuses themselves (the Center for Policy and Advocacy, the Labor Resource Center at UMass Boston, etc.). And we continue to develop relationships with our higher ed union partners, who continue to be our biggest financial supporters.

One of our major goals this year was to make PHENOM more visible across the State (and nationally). Early on in September, we hosted a Student Debt Rally in support of Elizabeth Warren's Student Loan Debt Refinancing Bill in Boston. And then presented at the UMass Dartmouth Conference: How Public is Public Ed?, Class Action's First Generation Summit, Campaign for the Future of Higher Ed (9th National Gathering). Finally we co-hosted the Taking on the Corporatization of Higher Ed with Mass Jobs with Justice and UMass Boston's Labor Resource Center. We have also had an increased national presence thanks to our partnership with Higher Ed Not Debt (a project of the Center for American Progress).

This visibility did not stop with organized actions on the street, but also continued into the State House, where we have focused on building relationships with Legislators. Both chairs of the Public Higher Ed Caucus (which PHENOM helped to create) are now the Vice Chairs of the Joint Committee on Higher Ed (Sen. Donoghue and Rep. Garballey). This is really exciting for PHENOM, since both Sen. Donoghue and Rep. Garballey are great supporters of PHENOM and public higher ed generally. This year, PHENOM endorsed a number of higher ed legislative bills, including some exciting ones proposing free higher ed (including our own Finish Line Grant), open resource textbooks, and adjunct faculty rights. We hope that we can use this legislation to create a series of mini-actions to engage our wider membership, while also increasing our allies within the State House.

We also continue to convene the Higher Ed Summit Group, which meets monthly at the State House, to build a unified front amongst the three public higher ed segments (community colleges, state universities, and UMass). We had another successful Advocacy Day despite terrible winter weather and breakdowns within the coalition. We've come up with a more comprehensive organizing plan, extending recruitment and education into the Fall Semester and all of the members to the coalition still believe uniting our efforts will result in the best advocacy for public higher education and we will continue to develop those relationships. While there was a setback with the budget (both the House and the Senate budgets are not sufficient to maintain fee freezes across the three segments), but we are moving forward. Throughout the Summer and Fall PHENOM will continue to testify on its priority bills, both in person and through written testimony, and visit with members of the Joint Committee on Higher Education.

We also stepped up our media outreach this year, with some significant results. Board Member Max Page has a segment on the Bill Newman Radio Show in Northampton and I was invited on to talk about our Valley Gives and Advocacy Day. I have also been on the WPKZ morning show in Fitchburg to talk about our Advocacy Day and will be making continued regular appearances there. PHENOM has also been quoted or featured in the Boston Globe, the Telegram & Gazette (Worcester), The Republican (Springfield), the Daily Collegian (UMass Amherst), MassLive, WGGB, and Inside Higher Ed (not an exhaustive list). We also released two newsletters this year and a white paper on the student debt crisis by Anastasia Wilson, a Ph.D. Candidate in Economics. Finally, a number of PHENOM members have been working tirelessly to update our website, and the new website, which I'll show you today, will be up before the end of June.

I have already mentioned the fantastic opportunity that the Mass Teachers Association gave us to rebuild our Campus Chapters with \$50,000 grant for two-years. We also received funding from RESIST, a long-term supporter of PHENOM. And this was the third year we participated in the Valley Gives Campaign, this time setting a goal to raise \$5,000 and we raised over \$5,500 during our Valley Gives Campaign. PHENOM continues to receive contributions through COMECC and UMACC, but we have to find new ways to boost contributions. We also received contributions from our fantastic Higher Ed Union partners, with some increased contributions. We will continue to develop these relationships to open up new funding opportunities with unions who have not contributed in the last few years. While we were not as successful with our grant writing as we had hoped, we have started off FY2015-16 already with two grant applications under way and many more lined up throughout the summer.

Also mentioned:

- PHENOMinnesota: interested in creating a PHENOM-like structure and we're going to have an initial conversation with them, to share our history and insight.
- SEIU Adjunct organizing -- interested in learning more about PHENOM's framework -- and potentially using it on the private campuses -- Ferd is working with them
- MassBudget will be releasing a report on the cost of free higher ed. They've been consulting with us and we successfully pushed for them to look beyond CCs and SUs to the UMass system as well -- we need the numbers to put our advocacy in context.

PHENOM Visioning - Where do you see PHENOM in 3-5 years?

- Ken -- (1) when you graduate, how do we keep folks interested in PHENOM. Must follow up with the active members (2) How do we make the Legislative work sustainable, and not just falling on the shoulders of the Executive Director? -- Higher Ed Caucus, Summit Group, Council of Presidents (Community Colleges and State Universities) + UMass President, Committees, Board of Higher Ed, Secretary of Education.
 - Natalie -- as we build up the Campus Chapters -- really need to work in the Legislative piece, works at Bristol CC where they'd had a Legislator Coffee Meeting. Bring legislators to campus and also mini-actions
- Neil -- (1) Structured Actions Plans. Be prepared. Coalition is always going to fractured. How do we bring them back in and pull in new people quickly? (2) Grassroots activities: very active chapters. Have social events or signature gathering. FUN + ACTION. each semester. (3) Rotation and Executive Rotation -- Have an action plan to engage new leaders (union, administrators, etc.). Preparing for success. Lots on Natalie's plate + Leaders on Board
- Juhi -- Bring Campus Chapters out into the Community. Why can't we be canvassing about PHENOM? Believes she has students who would be interested in doing this.
- Ferd -- Legislative and Campus Organizing: Campus Chapters invite Legislators to the Campus. Organizing legislative work on the campus. Even can help launch a campus chapter.

- Max -- (1) Free Higher Ed (3-5 year goal). Be methodical. (2) Tax campaign (going to take the next three years). (3) Campus Chapters -- include key community groups and K-12 groups.
- Carl -- value of energetic staff and MTA \$ -- need more \$ - need to raise more and need to find more allies
- Ben -- (1) 3-5 years, well established chapters on all 29 Campuses. Self-sustaining. What holds campus chapters together? What topics? What's successful? (2) Free Higher Ed and yearly progress reports. Director we're trying to go.
- Neil -- (1) Video Media. Personal stories of students, faculty and staff. Youtube page. Get students to record their stories. For each chapter. Can you do a one minute video about your story? Then with activities, work video story captures in. (2) Keeping Chapters active -- ambassadors to the student government. Welcome them to the role. A lot of people just don't know about PHENOM.
- Penelope -- 2016 Election and Higher Ed. Can we play an active role in our "natural spotlight?" Language is shifting. Elizabeth Warren -- "debt-free" we want to be giving solutions.
- Ernesto -- Juniors and Seniors in HS. Bridge from HS to College. Let them know we exist. Ground work -- Emails need to see faces, not numbers. Shared story with QCC President (and all roles: basketball, newspaper, and honors society) then told the story. Lift up those stories/faces
- Ferd -- No statewide student association. (1) SAC? SGA Pres + Trustees, (2) Radical students - building an SSA independent of the SGA, (3) Do it through PHENOM's Campus Chapters.
- Ken -- two biggest funding sources are MSP and MSCA. Imperative to broaden the union support and will help keep things sustainable. Alumni and making sure faculty & staff are involved.

Review 2014-15 Budget | 2015-16 Budget Proposal & Vote | Fundraising Goals

- Ben walked the group through the proposed budget: [access it here](#).
 - Foundation and Trust Grants fell short of the proposals last year.
 - Expenses & Staffing - Close. Overbudgeted Social Security, Medicare, and Unemployment Insurance. Great considering we have Campus Chapters now.
 - Non-staffing Expenses -- Under Budget
 - Extra Staff person -- that didn't happen
 - MTA Budget -- we used about \$20,000 this year, but have about \$30,000 left and budgeted into the proposal for next year (and the contributions).
 - Already received \$9,000 for overhead.
 - Institutions/Corporate Funding -- we cannot put the money upfront for Lobby Day anymore (questionable with our 501(c)3 status, and since we're never the one's actually providing lunch. Doesn't make sense.
 - Natalie will follow up with Sean Garballey's Office about distributing the newsletters through the State House Mail.

- No longer going to have the space at UMA that GEO/UAW had donated in the past. Natalie is looking at Central MA (would address a whole lot of issues around whether we're too UMA or Western MA focused). Plus with Ferd's retirement, might make sense to move our PO Box to central MA. Lease is ending soon and we'll explore that switch.
- MSCA reimbursements (\$10,000) cover almost all of our non-staffing expenses (remember they won't cover staffing expenses).
- Natalie walked through the 2015-16 Proposal and Fundraising Goals
 - We'll be running a "10 Days to \$10K" Campaign in September. Goal -- raise \$ for supplies for the Campus Chapters, but also increasing our membership by at least 1000 (right now we have 5,500 in our database).
 - UMACC & COMECC -- we need to think about ways to use our contacts with our unions to encourage donations. Didn't propose a significantly higher amount, but we could exceed this with some effort.
 - Union contributions include the extra \$30,000 we know we're getting from the MTA.
 - No longer anticipating Institution/Corporate Contributions (it was always the amount reimbursed for the Lobby Day lunch.
 - Foundation and Trust Grants -- less than proposed in FY15, but still ambitious. Looking at RESIST (\$3,000-4,000) and one or two more to meet this. Hoping we'll be successful with our Ben & Jerry's application with all of the new developments re: Campus Chapters.
 - Most expenses stayed relatively the same. We did increase travel. Right now trying to get within budget with Natalie's travel. But note, she's only getting reimbursed 0.35/mile, where the federal standard is 0.575/mile. Will phase this in as our revenue becomes more stable.
 - What about groups on-campus funding? To make the Chapters more sustainable? SAC & BILC - Budget. Sign-ups, Annual Applications. Student Activities Director.
 - Salesforce has discounts/free access to things like Quicken. Also, if folks are veterans can access a lot of free/discounted professional services.
 - Textbook sales can create revenue for us (Amazon and Barnes&Noble, etc.). Natalie will schedule an email blast with steps early- to mid-August
 - Ferd -- we need to identify potential major contributors
 - Sustainer Donors -- will be highlighted on the new website
 - Campus Events -- PHENOM Events -- can proceeds be donated to PHENOM?
- Ken made a motion to approve the 2015-16 Proposed Budget. Max seconded the motion. Unanimous support for approving the 2015-16 Proposed Budget.

Vote on [Proposed By-laws Changes](#)

- Natalie summarized: (1) some language to make clear Board has the power to appoint and Executive Director, (2) change to the voting eligibility. Only those who have been to

two meetings in the last two years (at least 8 meetings) can vote on matters. Quorum will be 15 general members (voting and non-voting members).

- Ken - motion to adopt the changes to the by-laws. Max seconded it. Opened up for any additional discussion:
 - Naka -- who's eligible right now? Natalie -- about 25 members. We keep a spreadsheet.
 - Neil -- what do you expect from someone as a Board member? Raising money. Board can vote to abstain from requirements. Proposal: Article VI add something to require of Board members in form of contribution (or raising money).
 - Max -- let's discuss this in the next Board Meeting and General Assembly Meeting can vote on this. We will get it out to the membership in ahead of time to vote at Fall Meeting.
- Vote: Unanimous approval of the changes to the by-laws.

Interest Group Breakouts | Action Planning

- **Affordability Forum with Congressman McGovern: we know it will likely be the week of October 13th (when he is on recess)**
 - Title: Crisis of Affordability in Higher Education
 - Half-Day event? 9AM-1PM?
 - Affordability -- access to books -- open education resources
 - including student testimonies --start with student stories. Work in capturing student stories.
 - Develop video in the beginning of the semester of student stories to show at the event (Joel Saxe?)
 - Breakouts Afternoon
 - Student Debt
 - State of the field -- how higher ed works
 - varieties of free higher education
 - massachusetts budget in higher education
 - Morning Presentations
 - Mass Budget - Report on Cost of Free Higher Ed in MA
 - Sarah Goldrick-Raab - Wisconsin?
 - Demos -- Debt Free Report
 - Pay it forward plan (Oregon)
 - Something about Debt Relief - Andrew Ross (Debt Jubilee), Corinthian - for-profit degrees
 - Dates/Planning Timeline:
 - Secure date and time -- Friday Morning?
 - Campus Center Auditorium
 - Decide on other speakers
 - secure the budget
 - training for breakouts

- have materials
- setting up online registration
- Schedule:
 - 8:30AM - Arrive
 - 9:00-9:30AM - Testimonies - video/in-person
 - 9:30-11:00AM - Big Panel Presentation - Mass Legislators? Administrators? Ask State leaders to respond to discussion
 - 11:00-12:00PM - Breakout - Q&A after presentation
 - 12:00-1:00PM - Reconvene, Lunch?
- Include McGovern in event running breakout.
- Lots of opportunities for student interaction
- Who will attend?
- **Access Conference: November 14th at MassBay Community College (Wellesley Campus) UPDATE: NOVEMBER 7th SAME LOCATION**
 - Juhi, James, Dale, Neil, Ferd
 - We should identify a limited number of barriers to be addressed. These might include:
 - Child care
 - 1st generation
 - Transportation
 - Disabilities
 - Veterans
 - GLBTQ
 - Women (Crittenton Women's Union)
 - At first we thought we should try to limit to 4 or 5 areas, but the more we talked, the more there seemed to be.
 - Early steps would be:
 - 1. Ferd will draft a short statement Monday about what the conference is about, for us to use in outreach – to make sure we're all saying the same thing. Ferd will circulate to the group for feedback with the goal of finalizing it by June 19.
 - 2. Initial contact with all college presidents (or someone on each campus) to ask for a list of all groups on their campus involved in access work, with contact information.
 - 3. When we contact those groups, we would ask who they know in the community doing such work. We would also check out Massachusetts 211 to find community groups.
 - 4. When we contact groups, we would ask if they would be interested in attending, would be interested in participating in a workshop, and –

for those who seem particularly excited – if they would want to be on the conference planning committee.

- Other points:
 - Involve high school guidance counselors (through MASCA)
 - Compile resources we could provide to groups
 - Include TRIO programs and One Stop (food pantry/clothing/homeless students)
- Members of the committee will help with outreach/planning around some specific access barriers:
 - Dale – transportation
 - James – College Now – low income/1st generation/minority students
 - Neil – Veterans and GLBTQ
 - Juhi – child care
- Ferd’s afterthought: Rather than this being about Barriers to Access, it should be about How to Improve Access -- i.e. as Juhi says -- look more at solutions than just at problems
- Raise Up Mass/Legislative: We’re one of only 15 states with a flat tax. To change we need a constitutional amendment (3 year process starting with collecting 120,000+ signatures in the Fall).
 - Combat drift in fees and corporatization
 - to help control costs for future students
 - to unify faculty, staff and students
 - to utilize student power
 - Free Higher Ed, Progressive Taxes, Access to funding for students, Affordability, Quality system
 - Presenting the work -- action by students, seeking coalitions with like groups, increase public relations
- **Communications:**
 - Let’s first list all of the mediums we have:
 - 2 Newsletters a year (print and on website digitally)
 - website with blogging capability
 - Social Media - Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Youtube, Google+, Instagram, Yik Yak?
 - Events
 - Radio - Max weekly on Bill Newman in Northampton, and Natalie occasionally on WPKZ in Fitchburg.
 - Newspaper - Both local and campus based. Can we get columns for every campus chapter?
 - SALSA - Email blasts. General Info and calls to action
 - Phone Banking

- SMS Networking? Text to PHENOM to join? What's the Cost?
- Fundraising Pitches
- How can we make our content Shareable on Facebook and Trending on Twitter?
- Blogging -- variety of issues and frequency
- What could be communicated better graphically? Our stats?
 - infographics / Memes. Vision for higher ed and the state
- Council of Presidents -- Can we be doing the advertising/branding for PHEAD?
- Open Meetings - Combine it with blogging? Like SIM panel. Info session and open mic. Education + Action.
- Facebook Groups per campus to get the word out
- 1-2 page best practices for campus chapters.
- Manual -- little -- 3-4 pages about our communication strategy
- Newsletter - more holistically - content from the blog that resonates with people more broadly. Not something we're creating in one month to get it out.
- How can we use it more efficiently?
- Condense things down!
- What do we do? / Have you seen this? / Here's some data
- PHENOM \$ at work -- to inspire fundraising
- Share the videos in email.
- Podcasts?
- IBook Store and Google Play Store for our reports
- Tie in with the legislative timeline
- Regularly ask campus chapters what kinds of materials they need

Board Elections

- Slate of Candidates:
 - President - Kim Selwitz
 - Vice President - Colleen Avedikian
 - Treasurer - Max Page
 - Clerk - Carl Ericson
 - Communications Team Leader - Alex Nally
 - Fundraising Team Leader - Gillian Mason
 - Legislative Team Leader - Ken Haar
 - Organizing/Training Team Leader - Manny Pintado
- Dale motioned to vote on the Board as a whole slate. Ken seconded. Unanimous approval.

Approve Schedule of 2015-16 General Assembly Meetings

- Proposed Dates:
 - Saturday September 19th (Western MA)
 - Saturday December 5th (Central MA)
 - Saturday March 12th (Eastern MA)
 - Saturday June 18th (Western MA)

- Max motioned to approve the schedule. Dale seconded. Unanimous approval.

Closing/Wrap-Up/Feedback

- Logistics
 - Locked door was a slight problem
 - consider non-pizza food
 - great to be able to carpool
 - thanks for directions on parking and securing parkin :)
- Content
 - crisp!
 - good discussions, good preparation
 - good re-allocation of time to cover the issues
- Meeting Dynamics
 - room got cooler! was about to be a problem
 - could use slightly clearer intros to sections
 - Kim did a great job
 - keep the breakout sessions
- I look forward to coming to PHENOM meetings this year
 - may not be able to get to Annual Meeting
- Here's how I hope to participate with PHENOM this year:
 - Access Conference x2
 - Fundraising
 - Communications Committee
 - graphics
 - increasing recruitment and getting more people to get involved and stay with PHENOM
 - work with legislative issues
 - continue the charge
 - too much to write here :)
- Other comments or suggestions:
 - video conferencing for people who can't be there in person: skype, oovoo, etc.
 - for PHENOM members to be critical & cognizant of time, privilege and why we are all here