

MCSBA's 53rd Annual Meeting marks leadership changes

During the 53rd MCSBA Annual Meeting, held at Ridgmont Country Club on May 25, members elected new officers for the coming school year, and celebrated the contributions made by outgoing association Executive Director Sherry Johnson.

Members elected Amy West (HFL) as President, Matt Metras (WI) as Vice President; and John Abbott (B2) as Treasurer. Gary Bracken (Spe) will serve as Past President.

Amy West has been a member of the Honeoye Falls-Lima Board of Education since 2011. She has served as that board's president and vice president. She has been a member of MCSBA's Information Exchange Committee and co-chair of the Labor Relations Committee.

During her terms as President of the HFL Board, Amy was also a member of MCSBA's Executive Committee

Matt Metras has served on the West Irondequoit School Board since 2018 and is currently that board's Vice President. He just completed his second term as Co-Chair of MCSBA's Legislative Committee.

During their terms as committee chairs, both Amy West and Matt Metras were members of the MCSBA Steering Committee.

John Abbott was a member of the Hilton Board from 1984 -1993, and has served on the Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES Board since 1994. He has been the MCSBA Treasurer since 2002; before that he served a term as co-chair of the Labor Relations Committee.



ABOVE: 2022-2023 MCSBA Leaders – Vice President Matt Metras (WI), MCSBA Executive Director Amy Thomas, Past President Gary Bracken (Spe), President Amy West (HFL), and Treasurer John Abbott (B2).

RIGHT: Outgoing Executive Director Sherry Johnson and incoming Executive Director Amy Thomas.



Sherry Johnson honored for her leadership as she retires

During the annual meeting, members and guests celebrated the contributions made by outgoing Executive Director Sherry Johnson and thanked her for her efforts on behalf of member districts and their students.

For more about the annual meeting and the celebration of Sherry Johnson's leadership, go to pages 5 - 7.

President – Gary Bracken, Spencerport CSD

Vice President – Amy West, Honeoye Falls-Lima CSD

Past President – Amy Jo Thomas, Pittsford CSD

Treasurer – John Abbott, Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES

Executive Director – Sherry Johnson Sherry_Johnson@boces.monroe.edu

Program Director – Nancy Pickering Nancy_Pickering@boces.monroe.edu



June 2022 INDEX

| | |
|--|-----|
| 53 rd Annual Meeting marks leadership changes | 1 |
| Farewells / Welcomes | 2 |
| From Our Outgoing President | 3 |
| From our Incoming President | 4 |
| Annual Meeting Coverage | 5-7 |
| MCSBA Open House | 8 |
| School Law Conference | 9 |
| Penfield Robotics Team – World Champions | 9 |
| IE: County Systems Integration Project | 10 |
| LR: RASHP II Update | 11 |
| Clerk Conference | 12 |

Farewells / Welcomes

FAREWELL AND THANK YOU TO RETIRING MCSBA LEADERS



FAREWELL TO OTHER RETIREES

Damon Buffum (Fpt)
 Julie Christensen (Ken)
 Bob Dickson (B1) – in memoriam
 Christopher Eckhardt (Vic)
 Matthew Fink (WI)
 Mike Grabowski (CC)
 Shaun Hakiel (Pen)
 Kevin Hutton (Spe)
 Greg Kincaid (Spe)
 Robert LaPlaca (Gre)
 Mark Porter (B2)
 Maria Rigillo (Web)
 Gary Stottler (HFL)
 Annmarie Strzyzynski (RH)
 Peter Sullivan (Pit)
 Michael Valicenti (Gre)
 Laura Whitcomb (B1)
 BoWright (RH)

ABOVE: Staff Members Sherry Johnson, 2015-2022 Executive Director, and Beckie Schultz, 2015-2021 Program Director;

Board Members Barbara Babiarz (Pen) 2021-2022 Labor Relations Co-Chair; Andrea Costanza (Bri) 2015-2016 Labor Relations Co-Chair; Tammy Gurowski (Web) 2017-2022 Information Exchange Co-Chair; and Amy Thomas (Pit) 2020-2021 MCSBA President, who is retiring from school board service to become the next MCSBA Executive Director.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Thomas Albano (CC) | Krista Khan (Pen) |
| Carole Barnabas (Web) | Lisa Kostecki (Vic) |
| Suzanne Bennett (RH) | Trina Lorentz (B2) |
| David Berk (Pit) | Michael Miceli (Spe) |
| Mark Buonaugurio (Gre) | Eleanor Haruko Oi (Bri) |
| Nicole Doyley (Pen) | Nicholas Picardo (Ken) |
| Megan Ferra (Gre) | Joel Robinson (HFL) |
| Janice Fortuna (Fpt) | Charlie Roods (Web) |
| Rebecca Hicks (B1) | Megan Sarkis (Spe) |
| Emily Kay (Pit) | Courtney Shouse (WI) |

From our Outgoing President: Wme



Gary Bracken

I want to thank everyone who was able to attend our annual meeting on May 25. It was a special night, where—due to herculean efforts of Mary, Nancy, and Amy—we were able to pull off the surprise of the century to kick off a celebration of Sherry's retirement. There were secret invites to our association membership, family, colleagues, and government officials and somehow, no one gave it up. Based on the permanent smile on her face, I think it is safe to assume Sherry had a great time and was extremely appreciative of the outpouring of love.

Thank you, Sherry, for your unwavering support of public education, not only through your work as our executive director, but also for your involvement in so many other initiatives. And I of course appreciate the help you give to the officers and me personally to make it look like we know what we are doing!

I also want to thank Beckie, Mary, and Nancy for keeping the wheels turning, setting up our meetings, dealing with Zoom, getting recordings posted, and the myriad of paperwork that makes the association happen. And of course, to our editor-in-chief of *News Scope*, thank you Judy for your patience as I missed deadline after deadline!

Finally as this is my last column, thank you Amy West, Amy Thomas, and John Abott for the amazing support you provided me through a difficult personal year. Thanks.

Last summer, the officers, Sherry, and I developed three goals for this year. Shortly after I had what I thought was going to be a goals-planning lunch with Sherry, she told me that she was retiring. Thankfully we were at McColley's so I could order a Guinness and take time to comprehend that.

So that pretty much decided the first goal: Hire a new executive director who can lead us into the future, ensuring that our service to our members continues to provide exceptional value while advocating for public education. So we approached this task much like boards do when considering a new superintendent. We considered a full search including forming a committee, publicizing to attract candidates, and going through all of the meetings and activities that are part of that process.

But we also considered whether or not we had an internal candidate who was highly qualified, and already had extensive knowledge and experience with the workings of the Association. As probably most of you know, long story short, we quickly identified that there was in fact such a person who we believed would be the best choice to be our next executive director. So once again, please join me in congratulating and welcoming our new Executive Director, Amy Thomas!

The other two goals – advocacy and laying out plans for succession in the office – are ones that are not as cut and dry with hard endings. As we all know, advocacy is an on-going process that entails working with our fantastic partners in federal, state, and local government to ensure that opportunities for public education for all kids are maintained at a high level.

While we were not able to make our trip to Albany this year, through a lot of hard work by the association staff we were able to meet locally, both in-person and virtually, with all of our representatives. And we look forward to maintaining those partnerships going forward.

As for succession in the office, our new Executive Director has spent the past several months working along side Sherry and the team, getting a sense of where we are and what the future may hold. I am very appreciative of Amy jumping into her new role and Sherry for being so gracious with her time working with Amy.

As a final statement, it is my belief that our Association remains a strong linchpin that brings us all together as we support the work of our individual districts and provide one other with camaraderie and fellowship. We have a bright future together as one team, one fight.

With that, I want to thank you all for everything you do for public education and thank you again for allowing me the privilege of serving as your President this past year. Have a wonderful summer!

Gary Bracken

From our Incoming President: Many thanks



Amy West

I am surrounded by so many courageous leaders, who believe in continuous learning and growing, who are always giving back. I find myself continually being pushed out of my comfort zone. And every time I have been pushed out of my comfort zone, I have grown. I have to admit, though, that the early months of my term as vice president made me wonder “what did I get myself into?”, as Sherry announced her retirement, and then Becky decided to retire, the current MCSBA leadership were both up for reelection and considering not rerunning. I had a very uneasy feeling about the future. Sherry’s steadfast leadership and competence is what gave me the confidence to take on the role, and I wondered what my role would look like without her?

If I learned anything from the pandemic, it’s that transitions are the new norm, nothing stays the same for too long, and that change doesn’t always mean bad, it just means different. And then, things slowly started to change. Nancy Pickering came on as the new program director. And I honestly could not think of a better person to fill that roll. She is passionate, organized, detail oriented, and one of the hardest workers I’ve ever seen. I was starting to feel a little better. And then Amy Thomas agreed to take on the executive director role, and my fears turned into excitement and relief. I met Amy five years ago when we were both presidents of our boards. She has been a true inspiration to me ever since. She is thoughtful, kind, collaborative, respectful, funny, positive, and so competent! I have so much admiration for Amy, and have every confidence in her ability to succeed in her new role as Executive Director. I look forward to working closely with her next year in leading the organization to meet new challenges and advocate for public education.

I am so grateful for Sherry! She has taught me so much and has been a big part of my journey as a board member. She has led this organization to be the envy of many. And always with passion, dedication, diplomacy and grace! Be proud Sherry, and know that you will be missed!

I want to thank Gary Bracken for being so great to work with. He has been a great support and role model for me, and I am grateful that he will continue to be part of the MCSBA leadership team. I also want to thank Gene Mancuso, and my own board at HF-L, for supporting me. And I want to thank all of you who I have met along the way. I want to give a special shout out to Tammy Gurowski, who I am going to really miss next year. She has been another courageous leader who has been an inspiration and a true asset to this organization.

I am so proud to be part of this organization, and the wonderful people who are a part of it. Thank you all for being a pleasure to work and grow with. And I look forward to a new year, filled with new challenges and adventures to navigate together. Thank you!

Amy

Sherry Johnson honored by GVASCD

During its annual awards presentation on May 12, 2022, the Genesee Valley Chapter NYS ASCD (GVASCD) recognized several educational leaders for their contributions to our field. Among the award recipients was MCSBA Executive Director Sherry Johnson who was honored for her advocacy efforts and school board leadership in the Monroe County region.

GVASCD is a regional organization aligned with the NYS ASCD and the national ASCD. Its members help one another to improve education. All educational leaders are eligible for membership in GVASCD. To learn more, visit the GVASCD website at <https://www.gvascd.org/>.

RIGHT: Executive Director Sherry Johnson holding her GVASCD award with award presenter Amy Thomas (Pit) after the ceremony.



Sherry Johnson honored as she retires

Sherry Johnson has served as MCSBA Executive Director since 2015, guiding the Association through some of the most turbulent times for public education and public health in our nation's history. During the 2022 MCSBA Annual Meeting, MCSBA President Gary Bracken (Spe) presented Sherry with a commemorative plaque and a monetary gift. He also thanked her for her contributions to the success of the Association. He was joined in praising Sherry' efforts by several guests.



MIDDLE ROW: : Seen with Sherry are guests Joseph Morelle, Chris Zeltmann, Brian Fessler, Maria Fisher, and Dr. Michael Mendoza.

BELOW: Sherry received a standing ovation from members and guests.



Honoring Sherry were Congressman Joseph Morelle, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer Chief of Staff Chris Zeltmann, NYSSBA Governmental Relations Director Brian Fessler, NYS Senator Samra Brouk Aid Maria Fisher, and Monroe County Commissioner of Health Michael Mendoza, MD, MPH.

Thanks to Mark Johnson for providing most of the Annual Meeting photos.

Annual Business Meeting

During MCSBA's 53rd Annual Meeting, members heard reports from President Gary Bracken (Spe) on the past year's activities, from Jo Anne Antonacci (B2) with an update on ACT for Education, from Sherry Johnson with her last report on Association actions, and from newly-elected President Amy West expressing her gratitude and hopes for the coming year. President Bracken recognized committee chairs and those retiring from school board service.

Members also approved the recommendations from the Nominating Committee regarding 2022-2023 Association officers: Amy West (HFL), President; Matt Metras (WI), Vice President, and John Abbott (B2), Treasurer. See page 1 for more.



FAR LEFT: Outgoing Executive Director Sherry Johnson, President Gary Bracken (Spe), and Treasurer John Abbott (B2) during the Annual Meeting.

LEFT: Jo Anne Antonacci (B2) reporting on ACT for Education.



SECOND ROW LEFT: Executive Director Sherry Johnson presenting President Gary Bracken (Spe) with a plaque recognizing his leadership.

SECOND ROW RIGHT: President Gary Bracken (Spe) with 2022-2023 committee chairs Frank Muscato (GC), Tammy Gurowski (Web), Barbara Babiarz (Pen), Matt Metras (WI), Kim McCluski (B1), Kathy Dillon (B2, CC), and Vincent Antonicelli (ER).

BOTTOM LEFT: Incoming Executive Director Amy Thomas and President Gary Bracken with representatives of **cashVest by three+one** which sponsored the event.

BOTTOM RIGHT: President Gary Bracken with 2022 retirees—Incoming Executive Director Amy Thomas who is retiring from the Pittsford Board, retiring Executive Director Sherry Johnson, and board retirees Pete Sullivan (Pit), Barbara Babiarz (Pen), Greg Kincaid (Spe), Tammy Gurowski (Web), and Bo Wright (RH).

Members at the Annual Meeting



LEFT COLUMN, TOP TO BOTTOM: Retiring Executive Director Sherry Johnson with Amy West (HFL) and Amy Thomas; James Patterson (Roc); Frank Nardone (CC); and Jeff Crane, retired West Irondequoit Superintendent.

BELOW CENTER: County Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Mendoza with Bo Wright (RH) and Diane McBride (RH); in the background are Mark Elledge (Pen) and Barbara Babiarz (Pen).



TOP RIGHT: Andrea Hinchey Unson (GC) and Michael Bailey (GC) with Frank Muscato (GC) and his wife Fran.

SECOND ROW RIGHT: Gerry Maar (B2), Chuck Phillips (B2), James Patterson (Roc), and Dennis Laba (B2).

THIRD ROW RIGHT: Janice Richardson (Web); Jennifer Birdsong-Ng (Web); Tammy Gurowski (Web); Mike Suffoletto, former MCSBA President and Webster Board Member; Sherry Johnson; and Tom Nespeca (B1), former MCSBA and NYSSBA President, current NYSSBA Treasurer.

BOTTOM: Some of those attending the Annual Meeting

MCSBA Open House

On April 14, MCSBA members visited the new MCSBA office on Metro Park to view the facility and enjoy one another's company. Shown are some of those who attended.



BELOW LEFT: Gerry Maar (B2), Tammy Gurowski (Web), Sandy Maar (Gerry's wife), and Brian Neenan (Web).

BELOW CENTER: MCSBA President Gary Bracken (Spe) & Matt Metras (WI).

BELOW RIGHT: Balloons outside welcoming visitors and helping them to locate the office.



Incoming MCSBA Executive Director Amy Thomas (Pit), and Vice President Amy West (HFL).



MCSBA Executive Director Sherry Johnson, James Patterson (Roc), Past President Amy Thomas (Pit), and Vice President Amy West (HFL).



Executive Director Sherry Johnson with Frank Muscato (GC).



MCSBA President Gary Bracken (Spe), Mary Talbot (MCSBA), Vice President Amy West (HFL), Joyce Kostyk (Fpt), Matt Metras (WI), Executive Director Sherry Johnson, Larry Davis (Bri), Catherine Dean (Pen), and incoming Executive Director Amy Thomas (Pit).



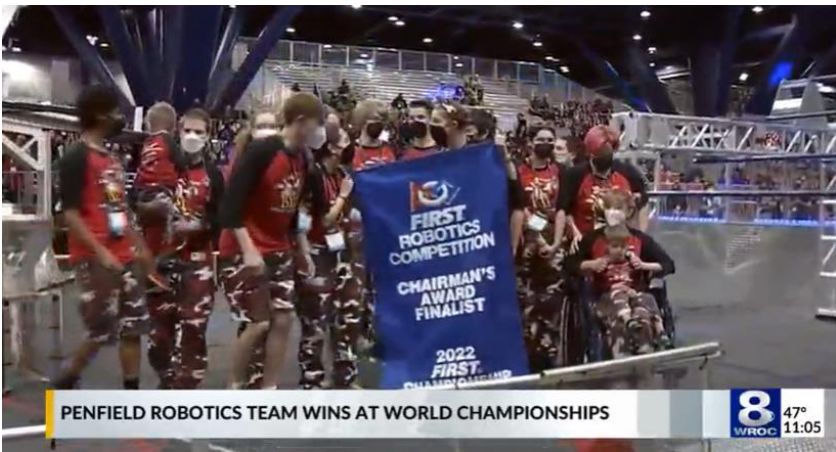
ABOVE: Law Conference presenters Michaela Perrotto (GC), Steven G. Carling, Esq., Quinn M. Smith, Esq. (WFL-BOCES), Anne M. McGinnis, Esq., Ph.D., Lynda M. VanCoske, Esq. (B2), Joseph G. Shields, Esq., Sara E. Visingard, Esq., and Charles E. Symons, Esq.

Those attending the April 28 MCBA-MCSBA school law conference received the latest information on a number of issues school districts are dealing with currently:

- * **Personnel Issues – Civil Service and Negotiations**
 Steven G. Carling, Esq., Senior Counsel, Harris Beach PLLC
 Michaela Perrotto, Assistant Superintendent for R & Labor Relations, Gates Chili CSD
 Quinn M. Smith, Director of Human Resources, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES;
- * **School Board Issues – FOIL Requests, Public Comment Period, Curriculum Issues**
 Charles E. Symons, Esq., Partner, Ferrara Fiorenza PC
 Sara E. Visingad, Esq., Partner, Harris Beach PLLC
- * **Student Issues – Student Discipline**
 Joseph G. Shields, Esq., Managing Partner, Ferrara Fiorenza PC
 Lynda M. VanCoske, Esq., Labor Relations Administrator, Monroe 2- Orleans BOCES
- * **Student Issues – Transgender Student Accommodation and Title IX**
 Anne M. McGinnis, Esq., Ph.D., Partner, Harris Beach PLLC.

Penfield robotics team world champions

Penfield High School’s robotics team, Rolling Thunder-Team 1511, won at the world FIRST Robotics championships in Houston, Texas on April 23. Rolling Thunder qualified for the big competition by winning the Chairman’s award at a qualifying event at RIT in March. That award is the most prestigious one in the program. On April 23, Rolling Thunder was one of six Chairman’s teams in the world to be named a finalist. Team 1511 has won a Regional Chairman’s Award 10 times in the team’s 18-year existence, but this is their first time being a finalist at the world championship competition.



SOURCE: Amal Elhelw. “Penfield HS robotics team wins big at world championship competition.” WROC-TV. Apr 24, 2022
https://www.rocksterfirst.com/news/penfield-hs-robotics-team-wins-big-at-world-championship-competition/?rss_link=big-story_1_title_3&email=5d13d09406fc309325210ec455be4940065cc236&utm_source=Salthr&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=WROC%20Daily%20News%202022-04-24&utm_term=Daily%20News

Information Exchange Committee: Monroe County Systems Integration Project

Tammy Gurowski and Laura Gustin



Those attending the April meeting of the information Exchange Committee learned about the community-wide Systems Integration Project from Laura Gustin, its Executive Director.

The Systems Integration Project (SIP) was begun in 2017 to redesign the current state of services (resource rich, results poor) to improve access to programs and services based on peoples' direct needs. The vision of SIP is to put people at the center of an interconnected system of education, health, and human services to improve the health and economic well-being of individuals and families in Monroe County, especially those who are vulnerable and impacted by poverty.

Congressman Joe Morelle and Regent Wade Norwood are the Co-Chairs of the project. MCSBA represents board members on the Systems Integration Steering Team; and Jo Anne Antonacci and Dan White represent both BOCES and the State Education Department on the team. MCSBA Executive Director Sherry Johnson has been actively involved in the SIP process.

Ms. Gustin described the evolution of the project, especially the impact that COVID had on its work. COVID provided a moment in time where the vision of the project could be put to the test to help the community through the pandemic and resulted in some pilots for housing, food and vaccinations. But, it also put the project as a whole on pause. The project is now back on track. Participants heard a list of accomplishments to date.

SIP has solicited for early adopters to champion the work to date and to test its MyWayfinder app which Ms. Gustin demonstrated. Early adopters for the education sector include Rochester City School District, School 17, and the Greece CSD. Full implementation of the project is slated for Q4 2022.

TOP: IE Co-Chair Tammy Gurowski (Web) with Laura Gustin, Executive Director, Systems Integration Project (SIP). Co-Chair Kerry Keyes attended via Zoom.



ABOVE & RIGHT: Some of the participants in the April 13 meeting.

Labor Relations Committee: Annual RASHP II Update

Those attending the April 27 Labor Relations Committee meeting received the annual update of RASHP II plans and activities from Scott R. Covell, Assistant Superintendent for Management Services, Monroe 1 BOCES, and Charles McLauchlin, Area Vice President and Consulting Actuary, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. Among their comments were the following:

The Value plan is the most popular right now. The High Deductible plan started in 2015 and has increasing enrollment.

A recent initiative is to monitor prescription claims more closely, working with Excellus and pharmacies to control costs and to ensure that the right drug is being prescribed for the right condition. In response to Covid, RASHP II maintained benefits and coverage, with no cost for COVID testing and vaccination, necessary office, urgent care or ER visits, diagnosis or treatment; as well as no cost for telehealth services regardless of purpose.

The cost per member for COVID treatment has trended down because there are fewer hospitalizations and deaths. However, new variants are coming that tend to be less deadly or damaging even though there is an increase in contagiousness.

There is no extra capacity in the health care system to handle COVID, so planned surgeries are often delayed.

Areas of focus include Administrative TPA efficiencies, enrollment outsourcing processing improvement, and offer outsourcing for retiree billing process.

Transparency tools for claims help clients get better service. The best ones rate providers and look at costs and the *best quality outcome*. The tools let clients compare costs between different providers.

Excellus' mission is to help members to get the treatment they need, from doctors they want, for a good price. Excellus is not focused on costs and cannot tell you if the provider *has the best outcomes*.

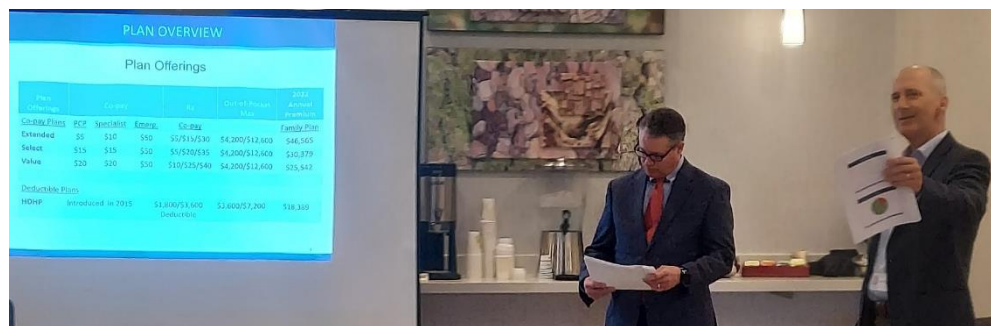
An annual 6-7% increase in healthcare costs is the trend.

Other areas in the country have coordination of care through Centers for Excellence. Upstate New York is a bit behind what is happening in rest of the country, where the focus is on the location of healthcare. For example, the care model progresses from telehealth – office – urgent care – hospital.

Serving on the RASHP Board of Directors is one representative from every district, as determined by the district, usually the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. There are also two union members each from the east-side and west-side. Plus, there is participation from east side and west side superintendents, although the superintendents do not have a vote.



ABOVE: Labor Relations Committee Co-Chair Frank Muscato (GC) with presenters Scott Covell (B1) and Charles McLauchlin of Arthur J. Gallagher & Company.



ABOVE: Charles McLauchlin and Scott Covell (B1) leading a discussion in April of RASHP II, the common health insurance plan used by MCSBA member districts. An annual report is provided by RASHP representatives to the Labor Relations Committee.

Clerk Conference: Preparing for upcoming annual events

During MCSBA's April 7 conference for district clerks from our region, Laura M. Purcell, Esq., Harris Beach PLLC, updated participants on legal matters involved with the annual budget vote and school board member election as well as with the annual school board reorganizational meeting. And, as always, clerks enjoyed a great session of sharing information during their traditional Circle Time.

Special thanks to the Planning Committee members (district clerk volunteers) who helped MCSBA staff plan the conference: Kristen Adler (ER), Cindy Cushman (Web), Connie Nenni (Hol), Rhonda Schaefer (HF-L), Mary Torcello (CC), and Kallia Wade (Roc).

LEFT: Mary Torcello (CC) with the cake presented to her in recognition of her upcoming retirement.
BELOW: Laura Purcell, Esq., leading discussion during the clerk seminar.



ABOVE: MCSBA Executive Director Sherry Johnson (back to camera) speaking to clerks on April 7.