



MCO NOW OFFERS A TOTAL OF FOUR PROGRAMS TO ASSIST WITH COLLEGE COSTS

Union stepping up to address the challenges weighing on members and their families, like college affordability

Last week, MCO announced two more programs to help members and their families afford the cost of higher education: the Academy Debt Assistance Program and a general Student Debt Assistance Program.

The **Academy Debt Assistance Program** will disperse 20 awards of \$500 each to current MCO members who paid out of pocket or got into debt to get their corrections training at a community college in 2014 or 2015. Switching to community colleges for training was a failed experiment, and MDOC returned to the paid academies in 2015.

The **Student Debt Assistance Program** will award 20 grants of \$500 each to current MCO members who have student loans from earning an undergraduate

degree.

The deadline to apply for either program is June 15. Award winners will be selected by random drawing. **These programs will run on a trial basis this year.** After we assess their value to members and effectiveness, MCO may or may not offer them in future years. Full details on both, including how to apply, are on our [website](#).

With the addition of these two programs, MCO now offers members four different avenues for help with college costs:

[Academy Debt Assistance](#)
[Student Debt Assistance](#)
[Free Online College](#)
[MCO Scholarship](#)

We aren't offering a "one-size-fits-all" approach; instead, we are providing members and their families the reassurance of knowing there is assistance available from MCO, no matter what approach they decide to take toward higher education.

The cost of college was one of the most-discussed topics at MCO's member listening sessions over the past few years. Members said the strain caused by college and other financial burdens worries them and their families. MCO leaders have decided to try these programs this year because we need to do something to address the challenges of our time. All of us should be rethinking what a union is and what it can do for each of us.

Thanks, members, for your support.

AROUND THE STATE: SRF INMATE KILLED IN VICIOUS ATTACK

A Saginaw inmate died April 8 after a brutal assault in a Level IV unit.

A prisoner appeared to have hit the inmate several times with a blunt object and stuck a sharp object in his ear, staff said. Officers responded and found blood pooling under the cell door.

TISM (Traumatic Incident Stress Management) team members visited the prison more than once and met with dozens of staff.

Michigan State Police are investigating. The suspect has been transferred to another facility.

A Baraga inmate was stabbed 22 times, including twice in the eye, while walking to the school building.

The assault happened last Friday on a walkway. Officers said the attacker was chatting with the other inmate like everything was fine before stabbing him, which prisoners call "lullabying." Staff also said the assaulted prisoner owed a gambling debt to other prisoners. He suffered a broken orbital bone. Both inmates are Level V. The assailant went to segregation.

Later that day, there was a fight in the school between two other Level V inmates. One prisoner stabbed another inmate in the neck with a pencil. Both prisoners were sent to segregation.

There were at least two other fights last Friday. No staff were injured.

Good work to AMF staff who had to respond to these dangerous situations.

IN MEMORIAM: DENNY CRAYCRAFT



Retired CO Dennis (Denny)

Craycraft passed away April 10.

Craycraft worked at MTU before retiring in 2007 after almost

30 years with the department. He was a dedicated union supporter, serving as a chapter leader and on the MCO State Executive Board. He volunteered every summer at the MCO Crisis Fund Golf Outing.

Craycraft was a veteran and a 50-year member of VFW Post 4406 and a Michigan VFW director. He was a huge part of making the Michigan Vietnam Memorial Wall for Fallen Heroes.

Services were last week.

Rest in peace, Officer Craycraft.



Executive Board member Cary Johnson was recently interviewed on Stateside, a public radio show broadcast

around the state, for a piece about corrections officer suicide and PTSD.

This story was heard by thousands of people around Michigan. When we

tell our stories and talk openly about our jobs, our genuineness can earn public trust and understanding.

[Listen to the story now.](#)