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Madison College union overwhelmingly approves MOU
Agreement prevents operating budget shortfall, possible layoffs

(MADISON) Feb. 23, 2012 – The union that represents more than 900 staff and full-time faculty at Madison Area Technical College has agreed to modify its contract to help the College overcome a projected budget deficit of $5.7 million for fiscal year 2012-13.

AFT Local 243 members and the Madison College Board have each approved a memorandum of understanding that will cap cost of living raises for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1.

“Severe budget cuts to technical colleges on top of a property tax freeze imposed by the state means that increases in the cost to continue our College’s mission have forced us to make a number of painful decisions to close the funding gap,” says Joe Lowndes, Madison College instructor and president of AFT Local 243. “The memorandum of understanding that the College and the Union have approved affirms our shared mission to serve our students and community. This agreement avoids layoffs and helps balance our budget under difficult circumstances that are beyond our control.”

Madison College President Bettsey Barhorst says this is another example of how the College and union are working together to ensure student success.

“For 100 years, Madison College has been a beacon of opportunity for students who want a rewarding career and life,” says Barhorst. “Despite these budget challenges, we will remain focused on our responsibility to provide our students with the education they need to meet the demand for a skilled workforce. Our students—and our community—deserve nothing less.”

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Madison Area Technical College serves approximately 40,000 learners annually, providing “real world smart” education through a comprehensive curriculum of technical, liberal arts and sciences, adult basic education and continuing education. The College also offers customized training for employers.