**Ohio Federation of Teachers Officer Bios:**

**Ohio Federation of Teachers President Melissa Cropper**

Melissa Cropper was elected President of the Ohio Federation of Teachers in February 2012. Cropper hails from Georgetown in southwest Ohio east of Cincinnati where she served as a library media specialist in the Georgetown Exempted Village Schools for 14 years.

She brings a strong history of leadership to the OFT having served as president of the Georgetown Federation of Teachers, Local 4903, since 2005 and as a member of the OFT Executive Committee for the past five years. Cropper led OFT's work on retiree health care and pension issues as Chair of the Retirement Committee.

While president of the Georgetown Federation of Teachers, Cropper collaborated with district officials to participate in the federal Race to the Top grant program which includes funding for reforms to improve education. She was the only active teacher to participate as part of a state team presenting a RTTT application to the federal review panel. Cropper has been an active leader in the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative, a comprehensive approach for transformational change in rural education, as a member of its Stewardship Team.

Cropper believes that public employees are the fabric of our communities. OFT members, ranging from  teachers to bus drivers to college professors to children services employees, and many others make a difference in the lives of the children and families they serve every day. As president, her focus is on supporting and empowering OFT members by leading their vision and being their voice.

**Ohio Federation of Teachers First Vice President Shari Obrenski**

First Vice President Shari Obrenski has served the Ohio Federation of Teachers and her local, Cleveland Teachers Union, Local 279, in a variety of capacities over the last 14 years. Obrenski began as a building representative at Jane Addams Business Careers Center where she currently teaches American History and American Government. She served as chairperson for CTU’s Publications and Social Committees, Member-at-Large and later as 3rd Vice President for Senior High and Special Schools.

At CTU, Obrenski is a member of the Grievance and Negotiations teams and is also a member of the design team for the district’s new Teacher Development and Evaluation System. She previously served as OFT’s Recording Secretary and as a member of both the Educational Issues and Higher Education Committees. Obrenski provided testimony to Ohio House and Senate Committees in opposition to SB 5 and HB 153.

She is proud to be a product of Ohio’s public schools as a graduate of Jefferson Area High School in Ashtabula County, Miami University, and Cleveland State University. Obrenski looks forward to serving the members of OFT and helping to increase member involvement and participation.

**Ohio Federation of Teachers Second President Lee Black**

Lee Black has been a member of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (CFT), Local 1520, for 11 years. As a leader in his local, he serves as CFT Vice President and Parliamentarian. He presides over the CFT Executive Council, coordinates CFT committees, and serves on joint committees between CFT and Cincinnati Public Schools. He has been a Building Rep and served as a bargaining team member.

In his 11th year of teaching, Black has served students in grades K-12 in 17 schools as a band director, a choir director, an itinerant band director, a general music teacher, and a teacher evaluator/consulting teacher. Currently, he is the band director and choir director at Gilbert A. Dater High School.

As a musician, Black has performed with the Cincinnati Metropolitan Orchestra, the Cincinnati Community Orchestra, and the Sycamore Community Band. He holds a BME from Eastern Kentucky University and a MEd in Secondary Education of Music from Xavier University.

**Ohio Federation of Teachers Treasurer Brian Kessler**

Brian Kessler is the Elementary Vice President of the Berea Federation of Teachers, Local 1699. He began his union work for the BFT as a building steward. He then went on to serve as Treasurer and Grievance Chair.

He has served on the negotiating team for five bargaining agreements between the Berea City Schools and the Berea Federation of Teachers. He is the financial, retirement, and health benefits expert for the team. Kessler has served as Chair of the Ohio Federation of Teachers Budget Committee for the last eight years.

As a first grade teacher, his passion is teaching children how to read and write.

**Ohio Federation of Teachers Recording Secretary Betty Evans**

Betty Evans has been a teacher for more than 40 years in Michigan, Georgia and most recently in Toledo Public Schools. She is an active member of the Toledo Federation of Teachers, Local 250.

During her time in Toledo, Evans has served on the TFT Board of Directors, as recording secretary, and as a negotiations team member. She has represented TFT as an OFT Executive Council member, board curriculum committee member, AFL-CIO delegate, community activist, SB5 spokesperson, Value Added trainer, and District Leadership Team member.