

Appalachian State University

Staff Council Annual Report

May, 2005 - May, 2006

The purpose of Staff Council shall be to provide representation for the staff community and to strive for a voice in decision-making on matters that concern staff.

Staff employees recognize their increasing role of providing professional support to the University. The Staff Council shall continually seek new opportunities for staff to offer their services and experience to Appalachian, while also ensuring that staff employees work in a positive, respectful atmosphere with opportunities for their own professional and personal growth.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Membership and Participation

Those who regularly attend Council meetings continue to participate in fundraising activities, to provide support to offices such as Human Resources on topics such as staff morale and staff welfare, to be involved in the improvement of staff quality of life, and to provide representation on University committees.

B. Scholarships

In May, 2005, the Scholarship Committee awarded \$4,885.00 in scholarships. The number and amounts of the scholarships continues to grow with each passing year. A successful Silent Auction in April 2005 earned \$3900.00 for the Associated Scholarship Fund. The planning committee for this event worked for many months to ensure the availability of funds. The April, 2006 auction earned \$2500.00 for this fund.

The University Bookstore made a generous donation in February of \$500 to the scholarship fund. In addition, the bookstore volunteered to donate \$50.00 per semester to each recipient who attends Appalachian. This donation can be used towards the purchase of books required for coursework.

The Scholarship Committee also worked with a private donor to establish the new Chuck and Robin deKrafft Staff Scholarship. The donated funds were used to distribute awards to four staff members enrolled as part-time Appalachian students.

C. Freshman Move-In

Volunteers from Staff Council participated in Freshman Move-In 2005, giving out directions, snacks, water, smiles and words of encouragement to very appreciative students, parents and family members.

D. University Calendar

Staff Council assisted Human Resources with designing the 2005 Holiday Schedule and other calendar issues as necessary.

E. Chancellor's Advisory Committee

Newly appointed Chancellor Kenneth Peacock continued the tradition of meeting with this committee. Chancellor Peacock answered questions and addressed concerns brought to the attention of representatives of Staff Council. Issues addressed included the need for an AppalCart stop at the Child Development Center and workload inequity. The opportunity to speak directly with the Chancellor on issues important to Appalachian staff members is greatly appreciated.

F. Christmas

In 2004 Staff Council raised and spent over \$11,000 during the annual Christmas shopping day. The highlight of the year for many volunteers, Appalachian staff members were able to purchase holiday gifts for 84 Watauga County children. Chosen by guidance counselors at each school, these children might not have received gifts for Christmas without the help of Staff Council. Items purchased consisted mainly of necessities such as coats, boots and gloves.

H. Appalachian Appreciation Adventure

Volunteers from Staff Council assisted with the Appalachian Appreciation Adventure staff appreciation event. This year Staff Council was also able to provide monetary support for this endeavor. Sponsored by Human Resources, the event replaced the Administrative Professional's Day luncheon and was a more cost-effective way to reach staff. The event was open to all staff and included free food, games, and much more. The event was a huge success and both Staff Council and Human Resources received positive feedback.

I. Give a Child a Coat Program

Staff Council organized the University's 4th Give a Child a Coat program. Over 440 coats were collected and delivered to a local drycleaner who cleaned the coats at no charge. The coats were then delivered to the local Salvation Army and donated to children and adults in need of outerwear. Other items such as scarves, hats and gloves were also donated. Staff Council received positive feedback from this effort which united staff, faculty, and students in a community service effort.

J. Staff Update

This committee published several newsletters that serve as a tool to recognize staff members for their hard work and achievements. The newsletter is also a forum to address staff concerns and to keep staff members informed of important events.

K. Officers

There were no officer resignations during 2004-05. The president-elect during the 2004-2005 year will move into the position of president during 2005-2006. Staff Council benefited from this continuity and looks forward to a second year led by a president who is fully prepared for the position.

L. University Committees

Staff Council continued to send delegates to various University Committees including the Traffic & Parking Committee, the Fringe Benefits Committee, the Tuition and Fees Committee, and the Calendar Committee.

N. Communication With Other Governing Bodies

In an effort to collaborate with Appalachian faculty, Staff Council promoted open channels of communication with other governing bodies such as Faculty Senate, the Student Government Association, SEANC District 3, Appalachian's Board of Trustees, and the staff assemblies of the fifteen other UNC campuses. Additionally, Staff Council established an ex-officio seat for the SGA president and Faculty Senate chairperson.

O. Events

Staff Council joined with many offices and departments to bring beneficial events to campus: an Appalachian Night with the Hickory Crawdads (co-sponsored by Alumni Affairs and Human Resource Services), Music on the Mall (co-sponsored by Human Resource Services and Business Affairs), a trip to Asheboro Zoo and the annual Staff Appreciation Breakfast. Staff Council also participated in the annual Employee Benefits Fair and the staff appreciation football game.

Q. Professional Development Opportunities

Recognizing that both staff members and the university benefit when employees are allowed to pursue educational and enrichment activities, Staff Council sponsored two professional development opportunities.

Over sixty staff members attended a time management workshop in December. The workshop, entitled "Do You Control Time or Does Time Control You?" was facilitated by a speaker from Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute.

Over 50 attended a workshop in April entitled “Is it Personal or Just Your Personality? Finding Yourself Through Myers-Briggs.” This workshop was facilitated by a certified Myers-Briggs counselor from Appalachian’s division of Student Development.

S. Staff Memorials

Staff Council officers created a plan for remembering staff members who pass away. Bricks are to be purchased from Staff Council funds and placed in the Staff Centennial Park. Each brick reads “Staff Council Remembers” and states the individual’s name. Three bricks were purchased this year.

Memorial books have also been purchased. As staff members pass away, a book will be displayed in a strategic location. Staff, faculty and students will be invited to write notes and messages in the books, which will later be given to the deceased’s relatives.

Additionally, at the request of Chancellor Kenneth Peacock, the officers wrote guidelines for the Appalachian Cares Fund. The fund, as proposed, would allow for monetary gifts to be made upon the death of an Appalachian staff member. Those guidelines are currently being reviewed.

T. Fundraising Committee

For the first time in two years, the Fundraising Committee had a chairperson. This committee benefited greatly when someone assumed this key leadership role.

U. Board of Trustees

The Staff Council president attended all Board of Trustee meetings and dinners. Staff members appreciate the presence of a seat for the Staff Council President on this board.

MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN

A. Membership and Participation

As with any organization, member attendance at meetings and functions could be improved. Many buildings do not have the recommended number of delegates. Whether this is due to lack of time to participate, apathy, or other factors has not been determined.

B. Scholarships

Staff Council scholarships are awarded based on academic performance and financial need. The amounts of the awards are decided by the Scholarship Committee but are ultimately dictated by the amount of money available to award. Each year there are many deserving dependants of Appalachian employees and, again this year, the committee expressed the feeling that additional scholarships or scholarships of a higher monetary value could have been awarded were the money available. In order to support this fund, it will be necessary, at a minimum, to coordinate a Silent Auction during the 2005-2006 year.

C. Morale

A recurring concern reported to Staff Council representatives is the decreasing morale among Appalachian employees. As we face the possibility of another year with a small pay increase, decreased insurance benefits, increased parking fees and a hike in insurance rates, many employees are questioning their choice in employers. Staff Council faces the daunting task of helping the Administration and offices such as Human Resources maintain morale on what is often a nonexistent budget. This is an area that will need to be a primary focus point again this year. Appalachian, and in turn, its employees, have been put into an unenviable position by those in charge of the state budget. Staff Council will work diligently to promote the positive aspects of working at Appalachian.

D. Workload Inequity

Staff Council officers attended a session on career banding. Hosted by the office of Human Resource Services, the officers hope this process will help address some of the workload inequities that staff members have complained of as they are asked to assume additional duties due to changes in policies and procedures. Staff members have also expressed the feeling that there is an improper division of duties among people of the same salary grade from division to division. Staff Council will assist the Chancellor, administrators and those in HRS in any way possible as we face the daunting task of evaluating each staff position on campus.

SUMMARY

Staff Council representatives endeavored to serve their constituencies and keep them informed of the many important issues affecting state employees this year.

The Council collaborated with other offices and organizations as needed and its efforts benefited not only the University and its employees, but, in many cases, the surrounding community as well.

For Staff Council to remain an effective organization, the continued support of University administrators is necessary and appreciated.

2005-2006 OFFICERS

Jenny Ware, President, Registrar's Office

Charlie Wallin, President-Elect, Food Services Administration

Deborah Brown, Vice President, General Studies

Dianne Dula, Treasurer, Computer Science

Janice Voss, Secretary, Graduate School