

*Council of University of California Staff Assemblies (CUCSA)  
Press Release, October 7, 2013  
<http://www.ucop.edu/cucsa>*

**University of California, Santa Cruz  
September 11-13, 2013**

The Council of University of California Staff Assemblies (CUCSA) held its first quarterly meeting of the 2013-14 academic year at UCSC on September 11-13, 2013. CUCSA is an advisory body composed of two delegates from each of the ten campuses, the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), and the Office of the President (UCOP). CUCSA meets on a quarterly basis rotating between the ten campuses, the national lab, and the Office of the President to promote, maintain and enhance communication within the University community on matters of interest to staff employees in accordance with California laws and Regental policies.

At the September CUCSA meeting, Chair Ken Feer updated the delegation on meetings that he and Chair-Elect Rob Kerner held with UCOP leadership. Conversations included discussion of the new health and welfare benefits that will be effective January 1, 2014, the benefits roadshow to be coordinated by Juliann Martinez of systemwide Human Resources, and the changes as a result of the Supreme Court passing of DOMA. Additional information can be found on these topics here: <http://atyourservice.ucop.edu>.

Delegates were assigned to one of four workgroups:

- Expanding and Strengthening Local Collaborations
- Creating Staff Assembly Ambassadors
- Stewarding or Completing In-Progress Projects
- Enhancing CUCSA's Internal Operations.

**Willy Elliott-McCrea, Chief Executive Officer, Second Harvest Food Bank, Santa Cruz**

Second Harvest Food Bank CEO Willy Elliot-McCrea provided delegates the history of the organization in California, how it helped build the community in Santa Cruz and how the University is a vital partner to the program, tripling the Santa Cruz area food drive to 120,000 meals each month with support from faculty, students, staff and even the Chancellor. Starting as a coffee house called Catalyst and sponsoring programs like "Breakfast for Kids", today, it is a coalition of organizations all over California that ensures adequate nutrition for needy people each month through various partners.

**Dr. William Jacob, Chair, Academic Senate**

Chair Jacob addressed the delegation in a discussion regarding the UC presidential search, reiterated that the written process was followed and agreed that although there were various advisory committees to the selection committee, there was not a large amount of staff involvement. He felt that the new president has had direct involvement with many issues that may soon face the University such as secure communities and protests. She seems to want to understand the University and its issues, adding that support for her appointment was strong from all areas. He briefly discussed UCPath and how for the sake of efficiency, services are being placed in one location without really understanding how everything is connected and yet its implementation affects everyone. He reasoned that UCCare has great potential to take advantage of our amazing medical enterprise but administrators must realize that a one size fits all solution is difficult to find and questions the rush to make plans uniform.

**Ashish Sahni, Associate Chancellor, UCSC**

Associate Chancellor Sahni spoke about diversity as an organizational and managerial commitment to develop an environment that maximizes and values the differences and the potential of all students, faculty and staff. Diversity is an organizational objective but it is not a federally mandated obligation even though it is broader in its definition, scope, reach and mission. He presented several slides that summarized the census data and its implications to the University population, for the students and for staff.

**Dwaine Duckett, Vice President, Systemwide Human Resources and Programs, UCOP**

Vice President Duckett addressed the delegation, reiterated the importance of CUCSA and how the organization provides different standpoints on how UC deals with employee relation issues so that common concerns are brought to decision makers. He stated that CUCSA helps provide a pulse on employee populations that help understand staff needs and concerns. He believes engaging staff this way is important to help move the University toward the future; nurturing the employee population

is key to its success especially when approximately 70% of the organization's overall budget is related to people and people programs. The Engagement Survey provided areas that can be focused on, beyond anecdotal information. OP now has the data to implement new programs that advance initiatives as a result of this information. Regarding the new benefit changes to be effective January 2014, in his opinion, many programs have been on autopilot and it was important to examine them thoroughly and determine their actual costs, their benefit to staff, and their value to staff. VP Duckett addressed other issues like salary planning, how OP would like to have a more consistent salary plan and how career tracks continues to move forward to establish a baseline of job descriptions across multiple campuses.

#### **Debora Obley – Associate Vice President for Operating Budget and Facilities Management, UCOP**

Associate Vice President Obley presented the delegates with the 2014-15 budget plan that she will present at the UC Regents September meeting. She was optimistic that in spite of a multi-year fiscal downturn, the state can finally help us again with funding. She feels the University is in a much better position due in part to the passing of Proposition 30 and how the governor was able to get the budget plan he proposed in 13-14 with UC in very high position on his list. The University also restructured its debt to the state for less cost, its savings providing us the ability not to increase tuition in 14-15. Additional information on the Operating Budget can be found here:

<http://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/budgets-and-reports/index.html>

In terms of Facilities Management, she spoke about the initiative to reduce the carbon footprint and energy usage on campuses where the investor-owned utilities give us rebates if we invest in energy saving programs on locations that have this type of program. For campuses that cannot participate, the state offers Proposition 39 funds so the same program can be implemented. They are also investigating wholesale power programs where, if possible, the campuses can do this themselves and the location can be in a better position to manage usage and save costs.

#### **Dr. George Blumenthal, Chancellor, UCSC**

The chancellor discussed with the delegation the role of CUCSA and staff in UC, and gave his appreciation for the work staff does, thanking staff for continuing to do a great job, for their advocacy for the University and in Sacramento. He continues to support UC staff as an important aspect to the success of the University's mission and he looks forward to working with staff to make the University a better place as the economy improves. He felt confident after meeting with the new UC President that she will provide further impetus with some of our initiatives, and hopefully, staff can provide further influence to her perspectives toward a stable budget, tuition benefits for children of staff and faculty, and staff morale, engagement and continued training.

He spoke about some of UCSC's history, how the "fighting banana slugs" won over the sea lion when voted on by students, how the human genome project is a continuing research locally and a multi-lab multi-billion project to learn how to put the mapped fragments together to create a final model. He spoke of his own research in astrophysics and astronomy, about dark matter and the formation of the universe. He also spoke about his input in the formation of the Staff Advisors to the Regents role and encouraged the delegation to suggest that they be included in closed sessions. He mentioned how proud he was of the program being approved, how it created more interaction with the Regents, visits with the UC -resident, participation on various committees, and hopes that the new president will be open to furthering the positions by having them sit in closed sessions or whatever the next step happens to be. The position has come a long way since the beginning and he is happy to have been part of its creation.

#### **Jason Simon, Director of Marketing and Communication Services, External Relations**

Mr. Simon introduced the delegation to a fundraising campaign to be launched at the September Regents' meeting, that will take advantage of crowd funding. The program asks students, alumni, faculty, staff, fans, celebrities and concerned citizens to make a promise and through the power of their social networks, raise funds that will benefit UC undergraduate students from California who have demonstrated financial need. The campaign program will run for six weeks, from September 18 through October 31. Money raised can be directed to an individual campus or a pool that will be distributed across the UC system. Promises and information can be found on this website: [promiseforeducation.org](http://promiseforeducation.org). Mr. Simon encouraged delegates to participated and noted that all the UC Chancellors are making promises at the \$10K level.

#### **Dr. Herbert Lee, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Campus Diversity Officer for Faculty, UCSC**

Dr. Lee gave the delegation a demonstration of how he engaged students in his statistics class using chocolate chip cookies. Although a required class, many students have pre-conceived notions of difficulty, therefore he uses cookies to motivate them to participate in active learning, engage their attention and show how statistics are relevant to their lives. As the Diversity Officer for faculty, he deals with affirmative action and is accountable for ensuring that the campus complies with government policies. As the Accreditation Officer for WASC, he ensures that the students have varied access to resources, that graduation occurs in a reasonable time, and ensures a process of retaining students. As Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, Dr. Lee takes part in academic planning, participates in program reviews, accreditation of programs, and manages academic personnel. He also manages the UCSC Arboretum, a home to a world-class living collection cared for by a group of horticultural experts. Information on the arboretum can be found at <http://arboretum.ucsc.edu/>

#### **Next Meeting**

The next CUCSA quarterly meeting will be held at UC Riverside on December 4-6, 2013. The remaining meetings for the 2013-14 year will be held at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab in March 2014 and at UC San Diego in June 2014.