

UC ANR Staff Assembly Update - Spring 2017

The UC Agriculture and Natural Resources Staff Assembly is now accepting applications for its first-ever scholarship program. Staff may be reimbursed for any work-related training, conference, class, etc., they have completed between July 31, 2016, and April 30, 2017. The maximum amount for any award is \$1,500. This will be the only year that scholarships will be offered retroactively.

Implementing this program gave the ANR Staff Assembly Council the opportunity to enlist the help of dozens of “ambassadors” around the state. Identifying ambassadors for each county office and each research and extension center was a major project for the ANR Staff Assembly Council in 2016-17. Our staff is located at a facility on the border with Oregon – the Tule Lake Research and Extension Center – and a research station in Holtville, just a few miles north of Mexico. We have offices on the coast, east of the Sierra Nevada, and everywhere in between – more than 60 in all. With our ambassadors, we have a way of reaching our far-flung staff in a way that goes beyond an impersonal email. We are also cultivating future members of the ANR Staff Assembly Council.

The UC ANR Staff Assembly Council members are also spread out across the state, so it budgeted for one face-to-face meeting each year. The first such meeting was held in San Diego in January. Amanda Chavez of the UC San Diego Staff Association was a featured speaker and an important opportunity for the members of the council who aren’t CUCSA delegates to get a perspective about another UC staff organization.

In order to raise awareness among staff employees about Staff Assembly, the group decided to purchase “Chico” shopping bags for each UC ANR staff member. The blue bags will be imprinted, “I am UC ANR Staff Assembly” and the staff assembly website, <http://staffassembly.ucanr.edu>. The bags will be mailed to the ambassadors for them to distribute to staff.

In what the council considered an affirmation of its important role in UC ANR, administration asked the UC ANR Staff Assembly Council for a representative to attend a two-day planning retreat for UC ANR’s Strategic Plan update. Chair Matt Baur served as a voice for staff at the retreat.