

Campus Update
September 2009

Staff Assembly Met with Linda Katehi, New Chancellor at UC Davis

On August 19th, our Staff Assembly Executive Committee met with Chancellor Katehi and shared with her Staff Assembly's mission, committees, and accomplishments, as well as challenges we will be facing in the next year. Chancellor Katehi discussed the importance of formulating ideas for shared services and new methods of service delivery, defining processes for fasttracking ideas to decision-makers, and finding opportunities to increase efficiencies and eliminate redundancies. Katehi spoke about the necessity of these and other changes due to budget cuts, furloughs, and salary cuts, but also encouraged staff to focus on the future and efficiencies that enable the campus to invest in existing staff salaries and training and the like when the budget recovers. The Staff Assembly Executive Committee meets with the Chancellor quarterly.

Participation on Campus Budget Planning

UC Davis included the Staff Assembly Chair in a campus wide effort to find ways to meet campus budget challenges. The campus established the Budget Advisory Committee which had five subcommittees focused on administration, instruction and research, capital budget and space planning, student services, and self-supporting activities. The Staff Assembly Chair was appointed to the self-supporting activities subcommittee. While we continue to hope that membership in various committees includes a larger number of Staff Assembly members, we are encouraged by this and other steps that begin to include Staff Assembly as a voice for staff concerns.

Efforts to Address Computing Access

Staff Assembly Technology Chair Rob Kerner has begun communication with administrators about issues addressing computer access. As the university conducts more of its business online and critical communications and feedback from staff is requested via online means such as surveys, access for all employees has become an issue. Following last spring's furlough survey, Staff Assembly received feedback that not all staff are able to participate because of a lack of access. Follow up indicated that staff were also not able to access key messages from the UC President and campus leaders regarding the budget or were not able to obtain the information first hand.

On August 21, Staff Assembly will meet with senior campus administrators to discuss these issues and possible solutions.

Staff Assembly New Members and Membership Drive

We have recently gained two new members to our executive committee—communications co-chairs Nicholas Barbulesco and Julie McCall. They will be working on our biweekly electronic newsletter, website improvements, and other communications needs. We are also actively seeking new members to join our executive committee as chairs for the following committees: Thank Goodness For Staff, Marketing, Membership, Human Resources, Citations for Excellence, and Transportation. We are additionally seeking members for our committees with an established chair.

Three Summer Events Were Held for Staff

This year, Staff Assembly sponsored three summer fun events for staff and their families. We held UC Davis Day at Raging Waters in June, UC Davis Day with WBNA team Sacramento Monarchs in July, and UC Davis Day with the Oakland A's in August. These events provided discounted group rate tickets to our staff, as well as a social setting for staff to get to know each other outside of the work environment, which increases staff morale. There were 30-60 participants in each event, but we hope to increase participation next year by advertising earlier and concentrating on promoting one summer event. Based on initial feedback, staff enjoyed each of this summer's events. We expect to gather more feedback and ideas for next summer via an online survey.

Staff Assembly's Marketing Initiative for Discounts and Scholarships

Staff Assembly has maintained our Staff Pin Program to raise funds for staff dependent scholarships while simultaneously obtaining discounts for staff and generating pride through UC Davis pins. We have embarked on another marketing drive to gain partnerships with local businesses and beyond. We invited our staff to suggest businesses at which they would like to receive a discount. We have gained a few new partnerships for discounts to our staff including a local spa in Davis, Spa Central, as well as a discount on men's and women's wear at Macy's. We have also renewed contracts to provide all staff a discount at California's Great America and at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom. Businesses benefit from this partnership through an increased customer base, opportunities to promote their business directly to our staff at events, and advertisement in our newsletter and on our website.

Staff Assembly Contributed Staff Opinions from Results of Our Survey on Furloughs

Our furlough survey and summary of response document was widely circulated to UC Davis and UCOP senior administrators. The document summarized staff concerns as well as suggestions and recommendations from regarding how furloughs should be implemented. The current implementation plan reflects staff recommendations. Further, when administrators posted a survey asking the campus community to choose from one of three furlough options, Staff Assembly addressed the options in detail and submitted a summary recommendation.

Working with Administrators to Ensure Transparency and Communication with Budget Reductions

Staff Assembly has been involved in urging transparency and communication in the budget reduction implementation. We have recommended that a searchable website be created where the campus community can find information on programs and services that have been cut or reduced from budget cuts. We want to ensure that there is a change in workload expectations to coincide with budget cuts and furlough implementation. We are concerned about workload expectations for staff, and will continue to cover this issue as furloughs are implemented.