



Annual Report of the UNC Staff Council

2016-17

The mission of the UNC Staff Council is to foster a positive and respectful working environment by advocating for the interests and concerns of each staff member.

Leadership of the council includes Lauren Whitaker, chair; Leslie Kamtman, past chair; Laurel Banks, chair elect; Sonya Linney, secretary/treasurer; Christia Banks, parliamentarian; Mary Graves, chair of membership and elections committee; Sarah Lawrence, chair of professional development committee; Jamie Moore, chair of community service and sustainability committee; Jack Waters, chair of social events committee.

Completing 2016-17 operational year

With two months left in our operational year, the Council is completing its major initiative of the year, to update and revise its bylaws, is holding elections and is selecting its award recipients.

- Initially adopted in 2008, the bylaws have been amended several times but have not undergone a complete review and revision. A vote is scheduled for April 20, 2017.
- Staff Council is in the midst of elections for its odd-numbered districts, and officer elections are scheduled for May 25.
- Nominations closed on April 3 for the two staff council awards, the Professional Excellence Award and the Community Service Award. This year's winners will be announced at the Celebration of Excellence on April 26.

Highlights of the year

Staff Council was proud to report that two staff members received **statewide awards** this year.

- Staff Council nominated TaWanna Archia for the Governors Award of Excellence, the highest honor bestowed upon a state employee. She was one of 16 state employees who were honored at a reception at the NC Museum of History. UNC-TV produced a [short video](#) about her efforts. It was posted on the Office of State Human Resources website. (https://oshr.nc.gov/2016-governors-awards-recipients#TaWanna_Archia)
- Joe Rick, as recipient of the 2016 Staff Council Community Service Award, was our campus nominee for the Erskine Bowles Award of the UNC Staff Assembly. He was honored at a Board of Governors meeting and was featured on the GA [website](#). UNC-TV aired a segment about Joe on its NC Now program. (<https://www.northcarolina.edu/news/2016/12/UNCSA%E2%80%99s-Big-Brother>)

Staff Council assumed leadership for planning and presenting a highly-successful **Employee Appreciation Day** in October. We were asked by the Chief of Staff to co-plan the event with Faculty Council, but our faculty counterparts were not able to assist with the event.

Approximately 175 employees, both faculty and staff, attended the Halloween-themed event, which included a catered lunch, costume contest, cake walk, pumpkin carving contest, pickle race, and more.

Staff Council partnered with the Military Affiliated Students Task Force to present several events in honor of veterans and military-affiliated members of the community. In addition to the annual lunch on **Veterans Day**, we coordinated a campus-wide letter of support and appreciation from Chancellor Bierman, an open house at the Teaching and Learning Center, and a screening of **SON OF LEXINGTON**, a short documentary film by a UNCSA alumnus about a local artist and Navy Seal killed in Afghanistan.

Staff Council's annual **Holiday Potluck** was attended by more than 100 faculty and staff members. A "dirty Santa" door prize exchange, festive attire contest, and musical performance by retiring long-time housekeeper Joseph Roberts were highlights of the event.

All-School Staff Meetings were held in October and March.

- Speakers at the October meeting included Carin Iannou, who gave an overview of the school's budget and capital projects; Claire Machamer and Elizabeth White, who gave updates on the webpage and MySA; and Delores Harris and James Lucas, who spoke about Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Jim DeCristo provided a welcome on behalf of Chancellor Bierman to 157 staff members in attendance.
- The March meeting was attended by 174 employees. Chancellor Bierman provided updates and vision for the Center for Design Innovation, the campus master plan and capital projects and the employee engagement survey. Jim DeCristo spoke about the state budget process as it relates to employee raises, and Interim Chief Thomas Younce greeted the staff members.

Campus Engagement

Despite demanding workloads, members of the Staff Council were engaged in the campus community in many ways throughout the year. Some examples include:

Provost search – 16 members interviewed the four candidates

UNC Strategic Plan campus forum – Four members volunteered to help with the event, and Chair Lauren Whitaker compiled the campus report;

Ombuds Committee – Leslie Kamtman has worked with the Faculty Council to establish a University Ombuds position. She and Lauren Whitaker are the Staff Council representatives on the Ombuds Committee, which conducted a national search and interviewed two finalists during the first week of April;

Quality Workplace Committee – Leslie Kamtman is the Staff Council representative on the Quality Workplace Committee;

Committees of the Board of Trustees – Staff Council members attend the committee meetings of the Board of Trustees;

State Employees Combined Campaign – Staff Council leadership served on the steering committee for the campus participation in the State Employees Combined Campaign. Participation increased significantly.

Employee Engagement Survey – Staff Council partnered with Institutional Research to promote participation in the Employment Engagement Survey. We coordinated opportunities for housekeeping staff to have access and assistance to complete the online surveys during their work day. Participation was extraordinary – 79 percent of professional staff and 69 percent of non-exempt staff completed the survey.

Professional Development events – Staff Council provided three workshops on Qualtrics online survey platform, two workshops on Excel Quick Tips, one on extreme couponing and one on meditation.

Community Service and Sustainability events – Staff Council sponsored participation in Community Roots Day and supported the UNCSCA community garden with three work sessions.

Special Events – Staff Council offered an after-hours get together at Corks Caps and Taps, and a family game night.

Participation in UNC Staff Assembly

The chair, chair-elect and past chair are the campus delegates to the UNC Staff Assembly. Participation remains challenging due to work load.

Ongoing concerns and issues

Work load and shared governance – It is difficult for many staff members to be engaged in shared governance activities because of heavy work load and perceived or actual lack of support from their supervisors. Many employees are told their participation in Staff Council and its events must be in addition to – or outside of – their normal working hours, and they receive no compensation for the extra time they spend in service to the campus community. Chancellor Bierman has made numerous statements in support of Staff Council, but the issue persists.

Salary, work load and resource inequity – Staff members continue to voice concern over inequities in salary, work load, adverse weather attendance requirements, work-from-home permissions, and office resource allocations. We are committed to realizing our mission by advocating for staff needs and addressing their concerns with the administration.

Redistricting – Staff Council districts are based largely on campus geography, which has become problematic due to relocations. We continue to look at alternate ways of organizing the districts.

Submitted by Lauren Whitaker

April 10, 2017