Fiscal Challenge—President Dan Fogel

As I write this month’s Staffline message in mid-December, my days are absorbed in working with administrative colleagues, faculty, and staff to move swiftly to address the formidable budget challenges facing our University. As I told our Board of Trustees at last Friday’s meetings, we have, in the convergence of the internal and external factors, a perfect storm far greater in its intensity and magnitude than even the most sage of fortune-tellers could have predicted.

In these times, we must make and implement difficult decisions that will enable us to build upon our competitive advantages. We must with a sense of high urgency devise and embrace more efficient ways of operating that preserve and enhance academic quality. I deeply regret that jobs will be lost as we bring our budgets in line with our resources. Throughout this process, it has been our priority to keep the number of persons who lose employment at the University as low as possible, consistent with strategic priorities and resource constraints, and we will actively assist employees who are adversely affected.

This is a deeply difficult passage for our society and for all of us as individuals. Drawing through open and collaborative processes on the resilience, resourcefulness, and courage of the UVM community, I am confident that we will discover and realize opportunities to build the value of the University of Vermont for our students, faculty and staff, and the communities we serve.

As we move forward, look for e-mail reports on UVM’s financial situation and check the President’s homepage, uvm.edu/president, for more information and on-going updates.
Benefits - Rita Lemire, Chair

The Benefits Committee discussed with Greg Brown, Operations Manager in Human Resource Services, how changes in employee benefit plans are announced. Further discussion on Flexible Spending accounts brought up the fact that in 2008 they had only about a 15% utilization rate among UVM employees. We discussed some ways that the Benefits Committee could facilitate getting the information out to employees during the next plan offering.

The contact sheet on the possible addition of Fertility Treatment to employee benefit packages was discussed. Further information was requested by the Committee and this will be placed on the next meeting agenda. A request for a Debit Card for Flexible Spending Accounts to be provided was discussed with Greg Brown. The committee agreed that the high cost to provide this benefit, current procedures for handling these expenses at retailers, and the administrative burden of this process make the option not viable at this point in time. Finally, the concept of Phased Retirement for Staff was reported on by Committee member, Mark Hall. The Committee was asked to read some information on this and will discuss the topic again at the next meeting in January.

Communication - Joanne Montanye, Chair

The December 11th meeting focused on translating the Staff Council brochure into three languages, updating the Staff Council website and what types of articles about staff would enhance the content of the website.

Committee members got their first look at translations of the Staff Council brochure into Vietnamese, Bosnian and Chinese. Joanne is currently working on the layouts of these translations, which vary in length. Mary presented an in-depth content audit of the current Staff Council website by itemizing the information that is currently on it and making suggestions about grouping certain types of information together on the site. A discussion about adding more content with a focus on staff members included potential featuring articles on staff members, their jobs and other staff issues.

Education and Professional Development - Todd Stewart, Chair

The Education and Professional Development Committee met on 12/8/08 to continue our discussion of identifying goals for the upcoming year. Some suggested goals include ideas for professional development courses and workshops, creating clear steps and removing obstacles to achieving degrees and the role of performance evaluations. The January meeting will include collaboration with HR to identify and clarify areas of collaboration this year.

Employee Environment and Facilities - Michelle Smith Mullarkey, Chair

The EEF Committee recognized Ernie Buford as the point person to coordinate activities for Focus the Nation, scheduled for the week of February 23, 2009. We will also be working with the Environmental Forum to offer a "Greening Your Workplace" track during Mastering the Maze; keep your eyes open for opportunities to learn how to make your workspace healthier.
Internal Affairs - Marilyn Baker, Chair

The Internal Affairs Committee was unable to meet during December due to weather related delays of its members. We will meet in January and continue our conversations on the Shared Leave for Sick Pool and UVM’s Short Term Disability plan. The committee is also investigating issues brought forth in contact sheets and is continuing to work on a campus wide customer service award and the employee evaluation process.

Recreation - Ida Russin, Chair

The 2008 Holiday Bazaar was a great success. I’d like to thank the University Community for supporting the event. The artists and crafters were outstanding, and there were a wide variety of items to choose from. The beautiful Grand Maple ballroom in the Davis Center is a great location. We hope many had a chance to do a little convenient early holiday shopping. The Recreation Committee sponsors the annual Montreal Casino trip on President’s Day, February 16, 2009. Look for the form in the Staffline if you’re interested in attending. It’s always a fun event. Upcoming events also include a guided tour of the Montreal Botanical Gardens, by an Extension Professor in the late summer of 2009. Drop by a committee meeting if you have an interest in sponsoring a trip.

Rules & Election - Rob Rohr, Chair

The committee voted to send a new version of the Election Policy Statement to the Executive Board to start the process of adoption by the full council with the hopes of being in place in time for the next round of council elections. Currently, no election policy statement exists and the council is bound by the bylaws of the previous council until such time as an Election Policy is adopted. Because of the vastly different nature of the old council, applying the old bylaws to Staff Council elections last year introduced a series of problems. The version of the Election Policy Statement addresses questions of how many representatives each unit is granted, who is eligible to run and serve on Staff Council, and how elections are coordinated with the Staff Council Office. Issues unresolved with respect to this version concern the eligibility of members of Collective Bargaining Units and some issues concerning grant funded staff.

These changes still have to be reviewed by the Executive Board, and University Legal before being brought to the Staff Council for approval. Please contact the chairperson, Rob Rohr, or any member of the committee if you have any questions, concerns, comments or suggestions. Committee meetings are open to the university community, and public involvement is encouraged.

For committee member contact information and summaries of the activities of this committee, visit: http://www.uvm.edu/~stffcncrl/?Page=committees/rules.html

Salary & Budget - Mary Reilly, Chair

The Salary & Budget Committee met on 12/18/08. Deb Bryan was elected as Recording Secretary and Minutes of 10/16 and 11/20 were approved. The committee discussed the university’s budget deficit and staff concerns over the impact it will have on their jobs. Overall the committee felt that salary cuts are preferable to job loss; salary reductions should be shared by faculty as well as staff; staff need to be supportive of each other; and having accurate information is important to reduce rumors. Jeff discussed the Open Forum with President Fogel on Jan. 6, and the committee considered ways in which it could help staff to participate.
Recreation Committee ~ Accent Travel

ACCENT TRAVEL - UVM EXCLUSIVE

A 7 NIGHT EASTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE ABOARD
THE OASIS OF THE SEAS, APRIL 17, 2010

YOUR PACKAGE INCLUDES:
 Virtually everything...from accommodations to around-the-clock dining options. Fabulous nightly entertainment and most shipboard activities as well.

PRICES START FROM

Balcony Staterooms: $1595.58 per person double occupancy
Includes cruise/port charges, taxes & fuel surcharges.
Single/triple prices upon request if available.
Low-cost Air add-ons are available.

UVM Staff SAVE $50 (ask for details)

SIGN UP TODAY!

Come Join This Great Cruise Adventure On
The Newest and Largest Ship on the Seas!

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RESERVE SPACE:
Call Angie Atkinson: 802-872-5644, Email: angiea@accenttravel.com
A deposit of $500 due February 27, 2009 will hold space for you.

Accent Travel
Call or log-on today at www.accenttravel.com
Discounted Ski & Ride Day Vouchers

for UVM employees, retirees and family members.
UVM identification necessary.
All are available in the Staff Council Office, 305 Waterman Building

ALPINE LIFT COUPONS ~ $10.00 OFF ANY FULL DAY TICKET, ANY DAY
NORDIC TRAIL COUPONS ~ $5.00 OFF ANY FULL DAY TICKET ANY DAY

JAY PEAK
VERMONT

ALPINE LIFT VOUCHERS – (FULL DAY, ANY DAY)
ADULTS ~ $35.00  ~  YOUTH (6 – 18) ~ $30.00

SMUGGS DAY VOUCHERS – (FULL DAY, ANY DAY)
ADULTS ~ $46.00  ~  YOUTH (6 – 17) ~ $36.00
Presidents’ Day Bus Trip to Montreal Casino
February 16, 2009

Take advantage of the Presidents’ Day holiday and enjoy a trip with your friends to the
Casino de Montreal. An accessible bus will depart from the Waterman parking lot at
8:30 a.m. on Monday, February 16th. For those of you living north of Burlington, we will
also make a pickup at the Collins-Perley Arena in St. Albans.

Each participant will receive $10 in chips to use at the Casino and a $10 certificate
good at any of the Casino’s restaurants.
Departure from Montreal is scheduled for 4:30 p.m. with an estimated arrival time of 7:00
p.m. back in Burlington.

Remember that identification and proof of citizenship are required for all trips across the
border. Changes to the existing border-crossing policy will not take effect until June 1,
2009, when all U.S. citizens who are 16 and older traveling between the U.S. and Canada
will be required to present a valid passport.

Our trip coordinator is Jim Read, 655-1321, james.read@uvm.edu. Please contact the
Staff Council Office, 656-4493, if you require accommodation or more information. Return
the registration form below and payment (checks made payable to UVM) by January
30th, 2009.

Name: ________________________________
Campus Address: __________________________
Campus Phone: __________________________
Email: _________________________________
# of UVM Staff @ $25 ____________
# of non-UVMers @ $30 ____________
Total Amount Enclosed: ____________
Pickup Location: Waterman Lot ________ Collins-Perley Arena _________
An Afternoon with Martin Luther King III
Thursday, January 22nd
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Roy L. Patrick Gymnasium

Special Guest Performance by The Burlington Ecumenical Gospel Choir

This is a ticketed event. Tickets are FREE and available per the following schedule. Starting Monday, January 12th tickets are available to UVM students, Faculty & Staff (1 ticket with ID). Starting Saturday, January 17th tickets are open to the General Public (2 per person). Tickets are limited. Please contact the Hoffman Information Center, Dudley H. Davis Center, 656-4636 for more information.
“Everybody can be great…because anybody can serve.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

As part of UVM’s celebration of Martin Luther King’s life, UVM faculty, staff and students will have the opportunity to sign up for Community Connections: A Day of Service to take place in the spring. Choices for service include supporting the Relay for Life (April 25), Community Works (April 18), or Green-Up Day activities (May 2).

On Wednesday, January 21, sign-up tables will be set up in three locations on campus:

Waterman Building (College Street Entrance) 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Dudley Davis Center (Atrium) 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Given/Rowell Buildings (Brickyard) 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Human Resource Services will be setting up the sign-up tables. These need staff coverage from all parts of the campus. Do you have an hour to volunteer for coverage at one of these locations? If you do, please contact Lynn Budnik, Lynn.Budnik@uvm.edu, 63107.
Campus News & Announcements

Staff Open Forum with President Fogel
on the FY 09 Budget Rescission and the FY 10 Base Budget Reductions

If you were unable to attend the Staff Open Forum on Tuesday, January 6, 2009 during the monthly Staff Council meeting, an audio file is available for you to listen to the Forum on the Staff Council website at www.uvm.edu/~stffcncl

* A full transcript of Questions and Answers from the Forum is also available on the Staff Council website *

If you still have questions and/or suggestions regarding the budget, please submit them to the Staff Council Office by phone at 802-656-4493, email at Staff.Council@uvm.edu or through Campus mail or USPS to The Staff Council Office, University of Vermont, 305 Waterman, Burlington, VT 05405.

All questions submitted will be forwarded on to the Office of the President and anonymity will be maintained unless otherwise expressed.

Please refer to the Office of the President Budget Updates for more information at www.uvm.edu/president/budgetinfo/

Faculty and Staff Lounge
Now Open in Waterman 209
Looking for a place to relax or read during your lunch break? The new Faculty and Staff Lounge in Waterman 209 is now open and ready for use. Please feel free to take advantage of this newly remodeled space.

Mark your Calendars
Mastering the Maze
Thursday, March 12, 2009
For more information contact HRS Constituent Relations at 656-2247 or visit http://www.uvm.edu/~maze/
Campus News & Announcements

Staff Council Meetings

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<td>Council Meeting: Tues., Mar. 3rd</td>
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Staff Council Office Hours

Staff Council Office
305 Waterman
85 South Prospect Street
Burlington, VT 05405

Monday - Thursday 8am-3:30pm
Friday 9am-1pm

Personal

We extend our condolences to Sarah Cooley’s family and friends.

Announcements

We welcome announcements regarding new Staff at UVM. Please send your photo and a short paragraph to Staff.Council@uvm.edu for inclusion in Staffline.

2008-2009 Staffline Submission Deadlines

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