



The University of Vermont

Staff Council

Serving as a voice and advocate for all staff at UVM, since 1971.

Staff Council President's Report

Friday, May 15, 2009

Board of Trustees – Committee of the Whole

Prepared By

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Since the last Board of Trustees meeting much has happened on our campus. The Phase I announcements on February 20th of immediate layoffs, position eliminations, reduced FTE's, and possible Phase II budget reductions for FY10 has had a significant impact on the morale of staff, faculty and students alike. Staff have expressed their concerns, confusion and anger to Staff Council and we have done our best to inform the administration of these issues while asking for more transparency and clarification.

Shortly after these initial announcements, Staff Council learned that the Wellness Program had been targeted as part of possible FY10 budget reductions. Human Resource Services has pledged that the Wellness Program will continue, but due to pending budget reductions may need to be restructured and refocused. In essence this could mean a possible elimination of on-campus, employee centered exercise programs held during the lunch hour. Although the Wellness Program is not a traditional benefit like health insurance, the positive impact on employee health and well-being is very real. On April 17, 2009, Staff Council, in collaboration with Wellness Ambassadors, presented the administration with a request to give serious consideration to the protection of funding for the Wellness Program. This included a petition signed by nearly 141 employees. We ask that as you finalize the budget for FY10, you think about the importance of preventative care and the financial rewards of providing these services to employees.

Staff Council has had a productive year and we are pleased to report on some of the accomplishments of a few of our Standing Committees.

- The Communication Committee, in collaboration with the Staff Council Office, successfully completed the redesign of the Staff Council website at the end of March. The new layout is more user-friendly and now more in line with the University's overall website design and layout. We encourage you to take a look at www.uvm.edu/~stffcncl
- The Benefits Committee worked with Human Resource Services to clarify the language regarding tuition remission for summer session courses taken by employee dependents at UVM. The previous language proved confusing and led some employees to believe this benefit was granted for summer session courses taken at other Vermont institutions.
- The Salary and Budget Committee has worked to update the procedure for the Staff Emergency Loan Fund. They will be working to finalize this procedure through the end of May and early June.

We continue our efforts to expand staff involvement in Staff Council and its committees. We will provide information regarding the outcome of our April Elections for the 2009-2010 Academic year during the Board meeting.