



## **Staff Council President's Report**

**Board of Trustees  
May 15, 2026**

**Prepared By  
Jennifer Jorgenson, Staff Council President**

Members of the Board,

Staff Council continues to serve as a key advisory and communication body, working collaboratively with senior leadership to support the University's mission, strategic direction, and commitment to transparency, shared governance, and staff engagement.

### **Engagement with Senior Leadership**

Over the past several months, Staff Council leadership has met regularly with members of the President's senior leadership team, including the Chief of Staff to the President, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer, and Chief Communications and Marketing Officer. These meetings have focused on improving institutional communication, supporting staff inclusion in major initiatives, and ensuring staff perspectives are incorporated into institutional planning and decision-making.

A central theme of these conversations has been communication and transparency. Staff Council finalized and shared a Communication Matrix designed to strengthen information flow between senior leaders, Staff Council, and the broader UVM community. Senior leaders have responded positively, with Staff Council noting that communication has already improved in advance of the full rollout. Over the coming weeks, Staff Council will continue discussing this tool individually with senior leaders as part of our regular liaison meetings.

### **Strategic Planning and Institutional Priorities**

Staff Council leadership has been engaged in discussions regarding the University's Strategic Plan and its implementation. Units across campus will be participating in a strategic alignment process, with broad staff involvement through committees and listening sessions. Our role as Staff Council is to help amplify staff voices, support engagement, and encourage participation at all levels of the institution.

Staff Council leadership has also been informed of ongoing dean and senior administrative searches, as well as the planning stages for the permanent Provost search. I will be serving on the Provost search committee to ensure staff representation in this important process.

### Staff Recognition and Appreciation

Staff recognition and appreciation remain high priorities for Staff Council and for the President's Office. Planning is underway for multiple staff appreciation activities, and a reimagined approach to Staff Appreciation Week. There is a shared understanding that these efforts may look different from prior years, with a focus on expanding the concept of appreciation beyond a single event while maintaining valued traditions.

In addition, Staff Council continues to lead the **Our Common Ground Staff Award** process, the University's highest staff-level presidential recognition. Work is ongoing to finalize the review committee, incorporate feedback from the Division of Intercultural Excellence, increase accessibility through translated application materials, and ensure that the nomination process remains both inclusive and rigorous. A celebratory event is planned for September 24, 2026.

### Budget, Compensation, and Financial Transparency

Staff Council leadership met with Finance and Administration to discuss budget planning for FY27. Discussions included potential targeted salary adjustments for certain positions, consideration of increasing the Professional Development Fund for non-represented staff, and the importance of transparent communication around budgeting processes.

Staff Council strongly supports efforts to increase clarity and understanding of UVM's financial model, including discussions around the Incentive-Based Budgeting framework, ERP implementation planning, and the possible development of a Finance and Administration summit to promote transparency and shared understanding.

### Human Resources, Performance, and Staff Experience

Meetings with Human Resources leadership have focused on the staff experience, including the performance review process, onboarding, and the sharing of employee survey results. Staff Council has provided direct feedback and encouraged broader community input, reinforcing the importance of consistent, equitable, and development-focused practices for staff across the institution.

We have also been included in interviews as part of the search for a permanent Chief Human Resources Officer as it nears conclusion. We look forward to continued collaboration with HR leadership as these initiatives progress.

## Communications and Institutional Identity

Staff Council leadership met with Strategic Communications to discuss processes for elevating staff initiatives, governance of enterprise systems (such as EMMA an email tool), and ongoing work around UVM's institutional brand. Staff Council appreciates the opportunity to contribute staff perspectives to these discussions.

## Looking Ahead

As we move into the summer and fall, Staff Council remains committed to:

- Strengthening communication and transparency across the institution
- Supporting inclusive staff engagement in strategic planning and major searches
- Advancing meaningful staff recognition and appreciation
- Advocating for professional development, equitable compensation, and a positive staff experience

Staff are deeply invested in the success of the University of Vermont, and Staff Council serves as a bridge between staff and leadership to ensure that investment is recognized, supported, and sustained. I appreciate the Board's continued interest in staff perspectives and welcome any questions or opportunities for further discussion.

Thank you for your time and your dedication to the University.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jennifer Jorgenson (she/her)**

President, Staff Council  
University of Vermont