

Staff Council Officer's Report

June / July 2026

SC LEADERSHIP WITH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP

On June 9, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha and Alan met with Alessandro Bertoni, Deputy Chief Communications & Marketing Officer and Adam White, Executive Director University Communications. Items discussed included:

- Communicating to stakeholders who the interim contact person may be when a person leaves UVM. This is primarily an HR function. Strat Comm leadership will be meeting with HR leadership shortly. This will be one of the topics
- Availability or development of Communication Templates. There are style guides and templates available on the Strat Comm website. There is a Brand Platform development project in process to be ready in about a year
 - Strat Comm serves as a collaborator on desired outcomes of unit/division/college communications. They are not a print & design shop.
 - Fine line between what comes out from University Communications as official University information versus what may be disseminated from other areas.
- Alessandro offered the 6/5 Lunch & Learn was well attended and helpful. Consider getting back in front of this group once the branding project is complete
- Strat Comm is looking at the quantity of emails sent out by Strat Comm and others and what best practices may be in the future. This includes Staff Council communications.
- Samantha raised the request to have Lauren Griswold attend this meeting more frequently
- Alessandro reinforced supporting the Shield Logo. There are zero options regarding any other representation of UVMs brand.

On July 17, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha and Alan met with Alessandro Bertoni, Deputy Chief Communications & Marketing Officer and Adam White, Executive Director University Communications. Items discussed included:

- The Brand Platform Development process (no, not a new logo) continues with activation to follow. This will be ready to share in the Spring of 2027. Not a lot of detail to share just yet. Strategic Communications leadership is planned to attend the September Staff Council meeting.
- An official campus photographer has been hired. Jennifer observed how active the UVM Instagram page is.
- Inside UVM will be undergoing it's usual refresh review, getting away from re-amplification of information and focus more on operational information. Trial runs to

begin fall semester. Adam asked for Council involvement. Aside from the internal versions, there will also be a Community Edition for early 2027 designed for non-UVM affiliates outside of campus.

- **Next meeting 9/7/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH HUMAN RESOURCE LEADERSHIP

On June 15, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha, and Alan met with Molly Propst, CHRO and Lindsey Melo, Director HR Operations. Items discussed included:

- Reviewed the communication matrix. Molly stated it was exceptional and helpful
- Reviewed the Staff Council Primer. Molly is very interested in being engaged and attend meetings.
- Samantha elevated the topic of recognition for non-administrative staff such as custodial, facilities etc. Lindsey provided information that HR is developing a “Random Acts Of Kindness” initiative for peer-to-peer recognition. Still in the planning stages. Jennifer rose a concern on how these may be distributed aside from electronic boards as well as any sensitivity to staff when English is not their first language.
- Jennifer reinforced the eagerness to get the Staff Appreciation process moving forward expeditiously now that Molly is on board.
- The issue of messaging and communication to stakeholders when a person departs UVM was discussed. An “offboarding” checklist is in development.
 - Jennifer raised the role Jack Dorky played with PPDOE and the desire to have that relationship continued.

On July 20, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha, and Alan met with Molly Propst, CHRO and Lindsey Melo, Director HR Operations. Items discussed included:

- RFP for additional voluntary benefits coming to a close. These will be employee funded but discounted if a large number of people enroll. Details yet to come
- Nothing in the works at this time to change any of the medical benefit offerings
- Retiree benefits are undergoing their usual annual review
- The UVM 10% retirement plan contribution undergoes regular reviews. Wait period is part of what is being looked at. Jennifer reinforced to be sure any comparisons to other institutions is Apples to Apples given the high cost of living in VT.
- No plan in the works currently to offer any early retirement incentives. The plan offered about a year ago was a bit misunderstood by some. It was offered to those already eligible to retire, but to consider doing so earlier than they had planned.

- There is a process in place to review the FMLA program and get more structure and resources in place to support HR partners. Currently the three HR Generalists handle all inquiries regarding process
- HR's Random Acts of Kindness program still in the development phase. More energy will be given to this in the fall when HR's web person returns
- HR manages an access database for retiree contact information. It is a manual process and relies on a retiree providing up to date, accurate contact information. The retiree edition of Inside UVM uses this database for distribution. A new ERP may house this information in the future.
- HR is reviewing the off-boarding check list to make point of contact information a part of the process when a person leaves so a person knows who to reach out to when someone departs.
- Staff Appreciation plans continue to move forward Do not expect a single week of activities and events, but several opportunities spread out over the year to begin with an Ice Cream Social at the end of September. The State of UVM address by Dr. Tromp this fall is not a replacement of or instead of any appreciation events. The address is an event unto itself.
- **Next meeting 8/17/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE PRESIDENT

On June 15, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha and Alan met with Jonathan D'Amore, Chief of Staff to the President. Items discussed included:

- Discussion on how to better recognize non-administrative staff such as facilities, custodial etc. The prior UVM President gave direction to leadership to develop recognition structures for this population
- Jennifer provided an update on the OE survey conducted by PPDOE and next steps regarding engagement and distribution. Alicia (CFO) has been sent the findings. Amanda Duling will attend the next CFO meeting to discuss in July
- Jennifer discussed the OCG program and progress. 38 nominations received.
- Jennifer gave some info on possible changes for OCG in FY27 such as better clarity on the nomination process and continued work on inclusivity.
- Search for the Foundation President is complete. Announcement in a few weeks regarding the position.
- State of the University address by Dr. Tromp followed by a picnic on 8/25 in Davis. It will also be live streamed and recorded. Only Dr. Tromp will be speaking, and this is anticipated to be at least an annual event. It does not replace anything to take place for Staff Appreciation

On July 21, 2026, Samantha and Alan met with Jonathan D'Amore, Chief of Staff to the President. Items discussed included:

- The OCG Committee has sent 15 applications to the President's Office for consideration of the 6 spots to be awarded. The awardees will be announced in August
- Save the date went out in the recent Inside UVM for the State of UVM event by Dr. Tromp (8/25) A picnic will follow. Ray Vega's quintet will be playing as well.
- There may be on campus interviews with Provost finalist at the end of September. Expect Staff Council, usually the Executive Board, to be involved in these interviews
- **Next meeting 8/19/26**

SC LEADERSHIP WITH VICE PRESIDENT for FINANCE and ADMINISTRATION

On July 16, 2026, Jennifer, Samantha, Amanda Duling and Alan met with Alicia Estey, Vice President for Finance and Administration. Items discussed included:

- Amanda provided a high level overview of the Occupational Environment Survey conducted by the PPDOE Committee.
 - Alicia offered there are plans in the works for a 1 – 2 day summit to help campus partners with facilities and maintenance issues, questions and concerns. Once finalized she will reach out to Staff Council to help socialize the event.
 - The discussion continued with best ways to follow up on the survey results
- Alicia committed to increasing the Non-Represented Professional Development Fund pool up to \$30,000 per year and will follow up when finalized
- IBB review is on pause for the summer as there are very few faculty on campus in the summer. The IBB Governance Committee will reconvene in August
- The preliminary group on Tuition and Fees has met to review the issue. The IBB consultant will meet with the full group in the fall to move the process along.
- **Next meeting 9/17/26**

Upcoming Leadership Meetings

- UVM President, Dr. Tromp, 7/26 (Day TBD)