



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

**Board of Trustees**

**January 23, 2023**

**Prepared By**

**Jon Reisenweaver, Staff Council President**

Members of the Board,

As you are intimately aware, the University is in an incredibly active state of change and evolution. The Staff Council, as well, has been embracing change and forging ahead with many new initiatives and appreciating our successes along the way. The Council had a very productive 2022 and we are excited for the coming year.

In my previous report I informed you all that The Council's Compensation, Benefits, and Budgeting committee had been reinstated. The committee has been fully populated with strong and strategically aware members that are eager to work with senior leadership. Collaboration with Labor and Employee Relations and the entire Human Resource Services team will be ongoing to provide meaningful and data-driven proposals for positive changes for non-represented staff here at the University.

Our November Staff Council retreat was extremely useful in recognizing the strength that comes from each of our diverse backgrounds. The retreat was specifically put together to allow a safe space for both our keynote speaker Dr. Amer Ahmed and Staff Council Representatives to share our culture, stories and history with each other. This allowed us to recognize and reinforce that our diversity is what will keep The Council and UVM staff strong through any adversity. It gave us the space to renew our commitment to The Council, to each other as colleagues, and to being the voice for all staff on campus.

The Staff Council is working with several senior leaders on fulfilling various pieces of the Recognition and Retention proposal put forth to President Garimella this past Fall. We will be championing this effort to continue to evolve UVM's recognition for its high caliber staff that keep this University functioning. We will be collaborating with senior leadership to host informal events where The Council and senior leaders can have more informal conversations and discuss identified topics and help increase awareness and understanding of strategic decisions and their impacts. As we look to continue to promote retention here at UVM there is also the consideration that awards and accolades for newer staff could come in the form of potential professional development funds to help further their growth in our campus community. These are just a few of the ideas that are being worked on to help recognize the value of staff on campus and retain the vital institutional knowledge that keeps things running smoothly.

Speaking as the President of the Staff Council, I can also share with you a sentiment that many of our constituents are feeling and struggling with. While we have weathered a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, picked up the pieces and even shown that we can thrive post-pandemic, many staff are feeling the effects of early burnout. The current economic climate, number of unfilled positions, added workload because of said open positions, and faster pace of work are contributing to this. There is no easy solution and no magic remedy, but it is something that has been commented on to myself and other Staff Council Representatives. Staff are always going to embrace a good challenge, but we must all recognize that progress comes with a cost that is not always monetary. I am grateful that we have been able to overcome so much and remain strong, but I would be remiss if I did not mention that staff are feeling it.

As we roll up our sleeves and dig into the new semester and new calendar year, it is important to also pause and reflect on our purpose for being a part of the University of Vermont. We as a collective staff, faculty, Board, and senior leadership share a common goal of providing the best possible higher educational experience for our students. This is something I have believed in in my twenty-six years of service here, and I know I am not alone. Many of us have mentored, taught, instructed, supported, and become friends with members of our student population. Their success is helped by all the work we do.

Finally, I want to specifically thank the Board and President Garimella for your continued support and commitment to communication with the Staff Council. The opportunity to share both positive and negative feedback with you is healthy and vital to maintain strong working partnerships.