

Staff Council Officer's Report

March 2021

SC LEADERSHIP WITH HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES

On March 8 and again on March 16, 2021, Caleb, Laura, Elisabeth and Alan met with Mary Brodsky, and Andrea Mast. There were many items to cover, thus the reason for the two meetings.

- As of the 3/8 meeting, UA & UE were still in mediation. It is up to the mediator to declare a 2nd impasse, not at that point yet. If mediator does declare a 2nd impasse, the process goes to fact finding if the mediator determines all other methods have been exhausted, again, not at that point yet.
- Salary reinstatement conversation and the senior administrators 8% reduction and reinstatement. Senior Administration will receive their 5% back, but the voluntary 3% additional taken will not be returned. Any bonuses that may have been given in the past 2 years have been to some in athletics where it was built into their signing contract, thus a contractual obligation to pay if benchmarks were met.
- The topic of Gift Card given for service awards as last year was discussed. The amount was discussed, in hopes of increasing the amount over last year. A more personalized "presentation" of the recognition was discussed as well as a better statewide offering of cards to locations outside Chittenden County for those being recognized that do not live locally.
- As of the 3/16 meeting, President Biden had signed a provision for the extension of PHEL and EPSL to the end of September at the discretion of the employer. There may also be an opportunity to increase an employee's contribution to the tax deferred fund for dependent care. Administration is in conversation about these options with a message to come out by the end of March.
- The Common Ground Award for 2021 was discussed. The topic will be raised with Gary Derr at the 3/17 meeting.
- Shared sick pool conversation was dominated by trying to identify the specific need(s) to be addressed with such an option. There may be better, different or already in place options to address this than a shared sick pool. Laura will bring to CBB as a potential item for them to explore and research as there are a few state and federal initiatives in the pipeline to also be considered. Caleb was sure to express that this has been an item for a few years, and there should not be a reason for UVM to "wait" on legislation for us to move forward on the topic.

SC LEADERSHIP WITH VP OPERATIONS & PUBLIC SAFETY

On March 17, 2021, Caleb, Laura, and Alan met with Gary Derr, VP for Operations & Public Safety.

- Continue to work with LER to be sure Staff Council is not giving poor or incorrect information regarding staff representation. SC remains neutral on the topic especially since it is an advocacy body for all NR Staff with diverse opinions on many topics.
- There was a brief discussion on division/unit/college alignment with regard only to Staff Council representative allocations. This happens every year to account for any UVM changes that may have taken place during the year to ensure there is appropriate representation across campus.
- The Our Common Ground Award process has been handed over to Paul Yoon who has been gathering information on the program. We have reached out to Paul for any additional updates and offer of support.

SC LEADERSHIP WITH UVM PRESIDENT

On March 18, 2021, Caleb, Laura, and Alan met with Suresh Garimella, UVM President.

- Not on the agenda, but a discussion regarding current COVID/Student issues in the press and on campus. It was stressed that 96% of students to date have not needed any type of reprimand or sanctions, only 4% have and a vast majority of those have been simple 1st time offences for mask wearing and missing a COVID Test. For privacy reasons, the press does not paint an accurate picture of this situation. Administration, however, is still and continues to review its policies and processes on COVID. It is recognized that while Staff and Faculty have been through a lot, students have been asked to conform to many restrictions at a young age and have been doing an overall great job in doing so.
- The conversation on salary reinstatement was a high level view of how it came to be. With 400 students that returned to campus that were not planned, this provided additional, unexpected revenue. While certainly not out of the original \$26 million dollar short fall woods yet, the President expressed that this first recommendation and thought he had when he was made aware of the additional unplanned revenue was how to give back to the staff that took the original cuts.
- There has been, and continues to be very serious and close consideration and discussions on the lower tiered salary staff and how to better address that groups issues. There were no specifics that were able to be discussed at this time.

- President Garimella expressed his very sincere hope of having another Staff Council gathering at the Presidents home in the summer or fall if and when the current restrictions allow for this.
- The topic of DEI and the president's vision moving forward was discussed. President Garimella is very much focused on actions as opposed to broad statements. He noted the permanent display of the BLM Flag, the new Display on DEI just unveiled and dedicated to Wand Heading-Grant in the Davis Center as well as the Our Common Ground Scholarship, all recently completed, as actions that in fact have been done and not just spoken of. Additional focus on hiring BIPOC in leadership positions continue to be a priority, noting the hiring of Dean Noma Anderson for CNHS as one example. The change of the Vice President of DEI role to a Vice Provost reporting through the Provost office and to Patty Prelock was also noted since, as the President said, that is where all the action and moving happens, being much closer to operations and academics, as an important change.