

The ASSEMBLED VOICE

NEWSLETTER OF THE STAFF ASSEMBLY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Winter/Spring 2005



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STAFF ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

ALL STAFF MEMBERS ARE WELCOME

TIME:

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

June 2, 2005
LAW 103, UPC

July 7, 2005
LAW 103, UPC

August 4, 2005
LAW 103, UPC

September 1, 2005
LAW 103, UPC

FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS,
LOCATIONS, AND LATEST
UNIVERSITY INFORMATION
RELEVANT TO STAFF

MEMBERS

VISIT OUR

USC STAFF ASSEMBLY
WEB SITE:

www.usc.edu/org/staffassembly

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS '05-- *Passing the Torch*

December 2004 marked the final meeting and adjournment of the 2004 Staff Assembly and the convening of the new 2005 Staff Assembly.

Elected by acclamation, incoming 2005 Staff Assembly President Michelle Jones opened the December session of the new 2005 Assembly with a bang, literally. The little-used, normally formal gavel has met its match in the hands of this longtime Law School administrator.

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2004 Staff Assembly President Connie Horak (left) and 2005 Staff Assembly President Michelle Jones (right)

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT & MICHELLE JONES

The Assembly has some new faces and new ideas this year. Some are challenging, but we expect to move forward this year with them. We have made accomplishments in the past, and we hope we can do the same this year.

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THAT'S SERGEANT MAJOR EVANS, PLEASE!



Sergeant Major Jeanette Evans (right) stands with (from left) General Mock, SGM Crenshaw and Lt. General Helmly at SGM Evan's promotion in January 2005.

Jeanette Evans, of Stanton, California, was promoted to Sergeant Major in January 2005 by Lt. General James Helmly, the chief of the United States Army Reserve.

Sergeant Major is the highest rank an enlisted Soldier can achieve.

You might recognize Sergeant Major Evans better by her everyday role in the Trojan Family, as Jeanette of Hospitality Services.

SGM Evans, a 21-year veteran of the U.S. Army Reserve, is currently stationed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, with the 377th Theater Support Command where she works as an assistant inspector general. In that job she travels to Army outposts throughout Kuwait to give briefings to other soldiers and to provide them with assistance in inspector general matters.

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WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT 2004 in Review

Connie Horak, 2004 Staff Assembly President

When I agreed to run for President of the Staff Assembly in December 2003, I had no idea how time consuming it would be. But with the work came many interesting experiences representing staff. It was a rewarding and exciting year. I will give you some of the highlights.

At the end of March 2004, I attended the three-day Trustees' Retreat in Indian Wells. Topics discussed included the new Strategic Plan and a presentation by President Sample on a Code of Ethics of the University. At first I was apprehensive, sitting with the Trustees at mealtimes, but I found them friendly and welcoming.

The big occasion for the year was commencement. I was invited to the various events, including marching in the academic procession. My big disappointment was that

John McCain was unable to attend the dinner the night before commencement as he was delayed due to his Senate commitments. I had looked forward to meeting him so I had to be content with sitting two rows behind him during commencement.

The Staff Assembly President automatically serves on the USC University Neighborhood Outreach grant committee, chaired by Carolyn Webb de Macias, Vice President for External Relations. This involves reading grant proposals, meetings where members divided up the proposals and presented them to the group, and then allocated more than \$650,000 contributed by the staff and faculty of USC among 33 projects. All programs involve a local community partner and a USC partner.

My personal favorite was Kid Watch, through the Department of Public Safety, LAPD, LAUSD School Police and all of the neighborhood

schools. This program is a network of residents who voluntarily watch over school children as they walk to and from school and other institutions in the neighborhood. There are more than 800 active Kid Watch members.

So those of you who contribute 1% to the Good Neighbors Campaign fund, I applaud you and want to tell you your money is well spent. I also want to encourage all staff to participate in this worthwhile, and needed, program uniting USC and the neighborhood where we work. I am pleased to say that I was asked to remain on the grants committee for 2005.

This year the Good Neighbors Campaign fund-raising was very successful with \$800,000 raised to support the University Neighborhood Outreach Grants program.

One of the goals of Staff Assembly is to keep members informed about the University. Through our monthly speakers, we learned details regarding the new construction on both campuses, including parking [Director of Transportation]; Professional Development; crime prevention, and especially identity theft; an update on the USC health plans; University Neighborhood Outreach grant projects; physical therapy offerings on both campuses; introduction of the new USC identity numbers and a presentation on the new Strategic Plan for the University by Vice Provost Michael Diamond.

I appreciate our speakers giving their time to share information with the Staff Assembly.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff for allowing me to represent them in 2004. I especially want to thank the members of the Staff Assembly who served with me. The Assembly is important to the life of both the staff and the campus and is the only way our voices can be heard. So I encourage everyone to get involved.

SERGEANT MAJOR EVANS

(continued from Page One)

This is SGM Evans' second deployment. Her first deployment was conus [continental U.S.] where she traveled to various Army posts to certify the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) prior to their being deployed to Iraq.

She also traveled to Thailand to participate in a joint transportation exercise.

Contacted via email, SGM Evans sent greetings to USC. "I want to say hello to everyone in the Trojan family, especially Hospitality Services staff."

Our sincere congratulations to Jeanette on this very significant career achievement of reaching Sergeant Major! We all wish her the best on this current deployment in Iraq, and await her safe return to USC and Hospitality Services.



SGM Evans in her more familiar role of Jeanette of Hospitality Services, in her "civvies" here on campus before her current Army Reserve deployment to Iraq.

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT 2005 *(continued from Page One)*

I bring to the Assembly more than ten years of experience working with the Rights and Responsibilities Committee and, most recently, Compensation and Benefits. In the past I have been Chair of both committees and served on the Executive Board. I'm in my 20th year with the university. Like you, I've seen many changes in and around the university for the better.

If you have any particular concerns and /or suggestions for the Assembly, please feel free to send us an email at staff.assembly@usc.edu. We read each and every email and will respond to your concerns in a timely manner.

If you would like to run for the Staff Assembly, please ask your co-workers to nominate you. We are an elected body of 60 members both exempt and non-exempt, and represent both the UPC and HSC campuses. There are six committees you can volunteer your services to. You can read about each one here in the Assembled Voice. The requirements are two monthly meetings, one with your designated committee, the other with the general assembly where all committees meet together once per month to discuss university business. Our elections are held each October and November. Please see our webpage at www.usc.edu/org/staffassembly for more information.



*Michelle Jones
2005 Staff Assembly
President*

Thank you for past support of the Assembly and I look forward to being of service to you this year.

QUESTIONS! We Get Questions!

Recently, Staff Assembly received several questions relating to Five Year Milestone recognition of staff members.

With regard to the staff recognition, the question was raised as to why some students who become full time staff are recognized for five year milestones at the annual Staff Recognition Luncheon and others are not. Also, there was a question as to why there are some staff who are not recognized.

These questions both relate to the criteria used to determine years of service. The criteria to determine the years of service has changed over the years. At one time it was determined only on continuous service and now we use contiguous service.

For some employees, it is very difficult to calculate contiguous service so the Staff Club relies on a program developed by Administrative Information System programmers using data on the Payroll/Personnel database.

Some of this data is controlled (calculated and input) by individual departments. If the department has not updated the seniority date appropriately, the calculations will not be correct.

For example, if a student is hired as a benefits-eligible staff employee, his/her time as a student **is not considered** in the calculation for any seniority (continuous or contiguous).

However, if the department does not update the seniority date, the AIS program will incorrectly pick up the original (student) hire date for the calculation. In that case, the employee would be given more years of service than appropriate. We also see

this problem when a person was first hired as a casual worker or has moved between faculty and staff.

To answer the question of employees who have never been recognized, this can happen due to their seniority dates changing because of leaves lasting more than 30 days or a break in service.

As I understand it the AIS report is requested by the Staff Club for all employees with a stated contiguous year determined by the Staff Club. For example I think this year it is all years ending in a "2" or "9." Anyone else will not be picked up and they could get skipped if they had a date changed.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS '05

(continued from Page One)

Your slate of Staff Assembly officers elected to serve for 2005:

<i>President</i>	<i>Michelle Jones</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Lois Nishimoto</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Jackie Mardirossian</i>
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	<i>Lorna Tureaud</i>
<i>Chair, Communications</i>	<i>Rita Gonzales</i>
<i>Chair, Compensation and Benefits</i>	<i>Evelyn Alva</i>
<i>Chair, Environment</i>	<i>Joyce Perez</i>
<i>Chair, Rights and Responsibilities</i>	<i>Ruth Scott-Johnson</i>
<i>Chair, Rules and Elections</i>	<i>Carolyn Ward</i>
<i>Chair, Transportation</i>	<i>Wade Thompson-Harper</i>

In addition to the ten Executive Committee officers, an additional 52 staff members have been elected to serve on Staff Assembly for 2005. The names and committee assignments for all Assembly members can be viewed at the Staff Assembly website, www.usc.edu/org/staffassembly.

COMMUNICATIONS

Rita Gonzales – Chair

David Amescua, Wendy Cook, Barry Grubs, Dawn Kita, Lisa Kofman, Sena Schlessinger, Christopher Stephan, Amy Yung

The Communications Committee is responsible for publishing the Staff Assembly newsletter, The Assembled Voice as well as planning and coordinating any Open Forums on the Health Sciences and University Park Campuses. In addition, this committee is responsible for maintaining the Staff Assembly’s web page, the Staff Assembly mailing list and publicizing Staff Assembly events.

This year’s committee is very excited about tackling the many changes that we have been given. We were able to successfully update the Web page with current information. Thanks go to last year’s committee for working on this. We were also successful on getting our first newsletter published and distributed. We are committed to getting three more published by the year’s end. Because of modern technology of digitizing photographs, it is easier to put them on the Web page and in the newsletter. We hope to have a more illustrative Web page and Assembled Voice.

As with any other business, periodically there are important procedures and new policies that will impact the staff. We hope to bring you as much information as we can to help you understand them better and/or to give you the contact numbers to seek answers to your questions. As in past years, we hope to organize open forums to invite experts to speak on these issues as they arise.

Should you have any questions or issues to bring up the Communication Committee, please contact any of the committee members.



ENVIRONMENT

Joyce Perez – Chair

Noemi Adalin, Deborah Aguilar, Octavio Avila, Myrna Cisneros, Neil Flowers, Beverly Franco, Paul McCabe, Wyman Thomas

The Environment Committee is responsible for monitoring the safety and security of the university working environments at the Health Sciences, University Park, and auxiliary campuses. In addition, the committee reviews and reports on recycling and waste reduction, and investigates disaster preparedness on all campus locations.

“Protect our Resources” was the mantra declared by the 2005 Staff Assembly Environment Committee, who hit the ground running with the start of the new year in preparation for the annual Environmental Fair. The fairs were held on April 13 on the Health Science Campus and April 20 on the University Park Campus.

Both events were the successful result of collaborative efforts among the Environment Committee, the Staff Assembly Transportation Committee, various USC Departments, including Waste Management, Transportation Services, the Department of Public Safety, and USC student organizations including EcoSC and Environment First. Additional improvements to the organization of the fair included free parking for participating environmental organizations and free lunch.

The fair provided an opportunity for the Environment Committee to remind the USC campus community about the significant role we all have in protecting planet Earth by creating awareness about what USC is doing and by providing information on what individual members of the community can do as well. The committee hopes that those who took advantage of the fair will gain more knowledge and do their part in helping protect the environment within their own departments as well as outside the university.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Evelyn Alva – Chair

Teri Aparicio, Bob Cuthill, Trudy Exler, Paul Flores, Shirley Johnson, Veronica Pete, Lillian Rivera, Chris Schweska, Pamela Wallace

The Compensation and Benefits Committee is responsible for monitoring and reporting staff concerns regarding university staff compensation and benefits issues. The committee reviews the benefits offered by the university to staff and passes on to the administration concerns and suggestions for changes or enhancements.

The committee is currently in discussions on **OtiS** (Online Timekeeping Systems), the university’s new timekeeping system that will affect all non-exempt employees and student workers in August of 2005. The committee’s concern is that the information regarding this new system be imparted to the non-exempt staff accurately, in a timely manner and in user-friendly language. The committee is working together with administration and is offering suggestions that we feel will help bring this new change about as smoothly as possible.

OTiS is

USC launches a new timekeeping system for all non-exempt staff employees and student workers on August 1, 2005.

What is OTiS?

OTiS stands for **Online Timekeeping System**. Time worked will be recorded, approved and processed through a paperless, all electronic system.

OTiS will eliminate the time consuming paper shuffle of filling out paper timesheets, hand calculating totals, collecting signatures; copying, filing and storing paper records.

For more information on **OTiS**, visit www.usc.edu/otis

OTiS Help Desk
(213) 437-1830
or email otisusc@usc.edu

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Chair – Ruth Scott-Johnson

Sharon Wallace – Vice Chair; Kay Allen, Delfina Candelaria, Ruth Johnson-Scott, Rick Lovely, Judy Mar, Bill Ortiz, Irene Ortiz, Fatima Perez

The Rights and Responsibilities Committee monitors and makes recommendations regarding the Staff Handbook, and any other publications with policies that affect the staff. In addition, the committee monitors issues related to staff development, sexual harassment, and staff grievances as well as promoting the recognition of staff as valuable, responsible members of the university community.



coming!

By now, all staff members should have received a small brochure through campus mail, containing a brief introduction and overview to this major change to the university's approach to handling compensation.

Each department has appointed a departmental liaison for the project to serve as your primary resource about the new system and provide details of how your department will use OTiS.

Employees will receive periodic communications from now through August 1st with more details of how OTiS works to simplify timekeeping.

Visit the website www.usc.edu/otis for FAQ and project updates, as well as the name and contact information for your departmental liaison.

RULES AND ELECTIONS

Carolyn Ward – Chair

Ardell Nolan, Vice Chair; Josie Amescua, Ofelia Galvan, Linda Lewis, Ellen Miyasaki, Lori Suarez, Loma Tureaud, Denise Wiegel

The Rules and Elections Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending changes to the Constitution, By-laws, and Standard Operating Procedures of the Staff Assembly. It conducts the nomination and elections process for the next Assembly as well as the election of officers. The committee monitors the Assembly's attendance, maintains the official membership list, and is responsible for filling vacant seats. The committee also selects the Staff Monthly Award recipient in conjunction with the Staff Club.

Our first meeting of the year was fully attended, and our busy agenda was set for 2005. Most of our members served on Rules & Elections last year, and they all worked very hard to keep the Assembly running smoothly.

Our responsibilities and agenda for 2004 and the current year have included:

- Reviewing and recommending changes to the Constitution, By-Laws and Standard Operating Procedures of the Staff Assembly. In 2004 we undertook and completed the major job of revising the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Conducting the nomination and elections process each year, as well as presiding over the election of officers.
- Monitoring the Assembly's attendance, maintaining the official membership roster, and filing vacant seats.
- Selecting, in conjunction with the Staff Club, the Staff Monthly Award recipient.
- This year we are also seeking help to redevelop the election process. We would like to change the voting process to an electronic system beginning this year and continuing for all future Staff Assembly elections.

Submitted by Carolyn Ward, Chair
cward@usc.edu

TRANSPORTATION

Wade Thompson Harper – Chair

Suzanne Alcantara, Corliss Bennett, Olabisi Carr, Lory Council, Shannon Hinojosa, Georgina Nuttall, Marty Ruggles, James Vasquez, John Wolcott

The Transportation Committee is responsible for monitoring staff concerns regarding parking and transportation issues including parking free, current utilization of facilities, carpool, vanpool, and other ridesharing programs, and the construction of new parking facilities on both the Health Sciences and University Park campuses. Members of the committee also participate on the Department of Transportation Services' Citation Review Board.

Greetings. The Transportation Committee has gotten off to a roaring start. We jumped in and began tackling major issues brought to us by the Assembly. We set up a wonderful rapport with Interim Chair of Transportation Tom Kenna, who has been very helpful and extremely prompt with responses to questions brought to him by the committee. Kenna will be a speaker at one of our General Meeting this year.

The Transportation Committee is happy to assist the Environment Committee with the Environment Fair by helping bring in the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) with information about ridesharing, commuting and the fuel efficiency of mass transportation and the clean air fuel that is being used with commuting.

We are working on some resolutions to traffic issues on both HSC and UPC with senior administrators of the university which will hopefully assist with putting up pedestrian walks in dangerous intersections and a possible traffic light at a dangerous HSC intersection. We are working to bring Vice President Cherrie as a speaker to the Assembly this summer.

This year's committee is very exciting and involved in all that is being and will be accomplished this year. We invite your concerns or comments to pass along to transportation. Please e-mail them to wharper@usc.edu. We look forward to serving you this year as one of the best committees assembled.

STAFF MEMBER OF THE MONTH AWARDS 2005



FEBRUARY 2005

Donald Ludwig

Director of Student Affairs
Recreational Sports, Lyon Center



MARCH 2005

Kirk Brennan

Senior Associate Director
Office of Admissions, Enrollment Services

UNIVERSITY STAFF CLUB

Denise Wiegel, 2004/2005 Staff Club President

The 2004-2005 year is off to a great start. Your new twenty-member Board is very enthusiastic and committed to achieving our goals. I will give you a brief overview of the events that have taken place during the fall semester and then events we are currently working on.



Denise Wiegel, Staff Club President 04-05

First and foremost, our Web site is now current and maintained. I want to personally thank Charity Tran for the amount of time and effort she has spent redesigning and updating our Web site thus far. Please feel free to visit us at: <http://www.usc.edu/org/staffclub/> and write to us with ideas and suggestions for new activities via our email address: staffclub@usc.edu.

We want you get the sense of being a part of the Trojan Family; that you would want to become a member and volunteer your time on one of our committees. Your tax-deductible membership dues pay for five graduate student scholarships, the newsletter, the Staff Member of the Month monetary award, the Staff Club Member of the Year monetary award and plaque, fall and spring socials, the Holiday Party, the University Staff Recognition Luncheon, and the Annual Membership Dinner.

So far, we have had four major events. The first event is the **Annual Membership Drive** in which we recruit new members and award monetary prizes to staff club members who bring in the most new members. It takes place every year from September 1 through November 30th. Our membership has now grown over 500. The first place winner was Olabisi Carr, the second place winner was Gloria Gamboa and the third place winner was Amanda Gaines. I would like to thank Veronica Pete and her committee for all their efforts.

The second event was the **Fall Staff Club Members Luncheon**, which was a huge success. It took place on October 21, 2004 in the Upstairs Cafe. We had over 100 staff attend.

Our third event was an **Over-night trip to Las Vegas**, which took place on November 6 and 7. Everyone had a great time.

The fourth event was our Holiday Party, which is our biggest fund raiser. The Holiday Party took place on December 17, 2004 at the Proud Bird. We awarded monetary prizes to the winners of the Membership Drive. I do want to thank Amanda Gaines, Chair of the Social Committee, and Jakita Morgan, chair of the Ways and Means Committee, for their diligence, perseverance, and hard work.

Our upcoming events are the HSC Staff Club Members Luncheon, Weekend in Las Vegas, awarding five Graduate Student Scholarships, the University Staff Recognition Luncheon, the Staff Club Member of the Year, and the University Staff Club Annual Dinner.

The annual HSC Staff Club Member Luncheon is held in March at the HSC Faculty Center. We provide this luncheon for HSC members who can't attend the fall luncheon. Please watch for the flyer because seating is limited.

Our scholarship committee selects five graduate students (they can be staff) each receiving \$1000, to be applied as tuition for the following fall semester. They are selected from among 20 or more applicants. The awards are presented in April. The application is now on our website.

The University Staff Recognition Luncheon will be held on April 27, 2005, at Town and Gown. This year we are honoring those staff whose hire date or seniority date ends in a four or a nine (i.e. 1984, 1999).

Each year, we select the Staff Club Member of the Year from a large group of nominations. At the annual dinner, which will be held in June, the award is presented. If you want to meet your Board of Directors and have a really good time with fellow members, please watch for the flyer.

Lastly, I would like to encourage all of you to submit nominations for the Staff Member of the Month Award. Staff Assembly and the Staff Club give the award jointly. Staff Assembly presents the staff member with a plaque and Staff Club presents a \$100 check during the Staff Assembly meetings. The nomination form is now on our website. I would also like to solicit your help in volunteering to be on a committee. Email us.

On behalf of the Staff Club Board, I would like to thank all of you for your continued support in making this organization so successful.

NEWS YOU CAN USE NEWS YOU CAN USE NEWS YOU CAN USE NEWS YOU CAN USE NEWS YOU CAN USE

CONNECTING FOR LIFE *Elizabeth Redmon, Executive Director, USC Emeriti Center*

You arrive on campus for your first day of work. Just a job, or a lifelong connection to USC?

As the years pass, you cheer for the football team, take pride in USC's growing academic reputation, pour your time and energy into your work—and almost without realizing it you have molded your life with that of the University. You are a Trojan—a vital member of the Trojan Family.

Then comes the time when you desire or need to change the daily routine and responsibilities. You retire, officially, but you can't really retire from a family. You suddenly become—not a staff member in a particular unit—but a part of the university as a whole, a member of the USC Retiree Community. The connection may be as strong as you wish and as long as you live.

Begin your retirement partnership now:

- USC is generous in its contributions to retirement plans. Expand this base by contributing the maximum allowed to supplemental plans. For information contact the USC Office of Benefits Administration (213) 740-6027.
- When retirement day is a few years away, begin the learning process by reading the booklet "Steps to Retirement and Beyond," attend the annual "Transitions" two-day seminars and workshops, and enroll in the Staff Retirement Association. For information contact the USC Emeriti Center, (213) 740-8921.
- USC Emeriti Center exists to serve USC retirees throughout their retirement years. Invest in future programs by setting up a payroll deduction of \$5/month to the Emeriti Center Endowment (account 99-0422-3672). Send written request, including your employee number to Celi Tonsick, mc 8003.

Then reap the benefits of a lifelong connection:

- Use the Retiree Gold Card for free parking, email, discounts, library access, and many other privileges. Eligibility rules apply.
- Enjoy fellowship and camaraderie with other USC retirees at social, educational, and cultural events.
- Contribute to USC's institutional memory and historical archives.
- Benefit from Emeriti Center resources on aging issues and advocacy for retiree benefits, recognition, and opportunities.
- Join the Emeriti College as it mentors students, gives community lectures or workshops, fosters research.
- Find short-term or part-time work based on your intimate knowledge of USC procedures and people.
- Realize the joy of volunteering on campus, from home, in the community, or at a national or international level.
- Become an ambassador for USC in your non-campus activities.

USC serves its retirees, and the USC Retiree Community serves the university. Both benefit from a partnership that begins on your first day of work and lasts a lifetime.

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USC STAFF ASSEMBLY

www.usc.edu/org/staffassembly

staff.assembly@usc.edu

Rita Gonzales, Communications Chair

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