

USC Staff Assembly General Assembly Meeting Minutes

Date: May 4, 2006

Location: UPC – SSL 150

Evelyn Alva, Octavio Avila, Steve Barnhart, Denise Campbell, Bob Cuthill, Ingrid DeCook, Paul Flores, Lisa Gallegos, Rita Gonzales, Shannon Hinojosa, Erika Jimenez, Michelle Jones, Dawn Kita, BaShai Lagarde, Ellen Miyasaki, Lois Nishimoto, Georgina Nuttall, Bryan Ortiz, Joyce Perez, Veronica Pete, Gloria Reyes, Marty Ruggles, Chris Schweska, Rick Scott, Ruth Scott-Williams, Christopher Stephan, Lori Suarez, Wade Thompson-Harper, Mary Trujillo, Pamela Wallace-Thompson, Denise Wiegel, and Amy Yung

Absent: Noemi Adalin, Jane Bartlett, Delfina Candelaria, Wendy Cook, Betty Davis, Stan Henderson, Shirley Johnson, Linda Lewis, Jackie Mardrossian, Ardell Nolan, Claudia Ortega, Irene Ortiz, Rosemarie Tellez, Wyman Thomas, Melvin Walker, and Carolyn Ward

Call to Order: A quorum being present, President Michelle Jones called the meeting to order at 9:07a.m.

Approval of April 2006 General Assembly Minutes: On motion by Rick Scott seconded by Wade Thompson Harper, the minutes of the April 6, 2006 meeting of the Staff Assembly were approved with minor corrections.

Staff Monthly Recognition Award: The Monthly Staff Recognition Award was presented to Alice Yee Mark, the Manager of Information Technology in the Center for Effective Organizations of the Marshall School of Business who was introduced by Dr. Edward Lawler III, Distinguished Professor of Business and Director of the Center for Effective Organizations of the Marshall School of Business. Professor Lawler praised the work that Ms. Mark has done in her eighteen years at USC – all in the Center for Effective Organizations. Through her efforts, USC's CEO has become a world-class organization. Assembly president Michelle Jones presented Alice with a plaque from the Staff, Faculty, and Students of USC and Staff Club president Denise Wiegel presented her with a check for \$100 on behalf of the Staff Club. Ms. Mark thanked the Assembly for according her this honor.

Associate Sr. Vice President for Administration, Janis McEldowney: Ms. McEldowney informed the Assembly that a memo issued jointly by Senior Vice President Dickey and Provost Nikias will be forthcoming regarding the expansion of the role and mission of the current Faculty/Staff Counseling Center which will be designated the Center for Work & Family Life. The Center will be receiving additional resources in the new budget year and will be adding services such as re-location consulting and referrals. In response to a question regarding a quote from the Daily Trojan (April 3, 2006) alleged to have been made by an administration official regarding the increase in the tuition rate being driven in part by an increase in the “cost of living” for staff, Janis replied that there was no change being made to the university's salary administration policies which state that all raises are to be merit-based and that “There are to be no across-the-board increases or uniform cost of living increases.” (Staff Compensation Administration Guidelines, Todd R. Dickey, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, June 1, 2005)

Personnel Council Report, Awilda Bregand: Ms. Bregand reported that they were gearing up for the Budget Development cycle (BDS). The first part of the Transitions series for retirement issues has occurred. The event was well-attended with 40 – 50 individuals participating. The event took place on the University Park Campus and covered such issues as Medicare Part D. Participants gave the session an overall rating of 4.8 on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). Another session is planned for the Health Sciences Campus in July. Employees participating in the TIAA-CREF retirement plan should receive a letter from TIAA-CREF shortly informing them of enhancements to the services available – especially with regard to technological services.

President’s Report, Michelle Jones: President Jones reported that she would be representing the staff of the university at the Commencement activities which culminate with the Graduation Ceremony on Friday, May 12, 2006. Her church is also hosting an event on May 20, 2006, for which she encouraged members with USC branded items to make donations.

Committee Reports:

Communications - Rita Gonzales:

The committee discussed the last issue of *The Assembled Voice* as well as plans for the next issue which they plan to publish at the end of August. The Bulletin Board and In The News features received good feedback. The next meeting is scheduled for June 8, 2006, at the Alhambra campus.

Compensation and Benefits – Bob Cuthill:

The committee is continuing its work on its major project which is a proposal for retirement health benefits for long-term employees. The committee has produced a spreadsheet of similar benefits at other higher education institutions and will present three different levels of benefits to the Assembly. A key element of the proposal is a “magic number” which is a combination of the age of the employee and the number of years of benefits-eligible service to determine eligibility.

Environment - Joyce Perez:

The committee last met on April 6, 2006. The Environment Fair was very successful. Of the eighteen people who signed up as volunteers, three cancelled, but seventeen people showed up. Of the thirty-three organizations which signed up, twenty-seven participated of which five were USC organizations. The new E-Recycling event went well for its first time. Eight pallets were filled for a total of 7,615 lbs of E-waste of which over 3,000 lbs were computer monitors alone. Individuals from the HSC made the effort to bring their items over to the event. Joyce particularly wanted to thank Quincy Samuels from Transportation Services for his help with dealing with the traffic flows and other issues on the day of the event. The committee will next be meeting on June 7, 2006, from 12:00 noon to 2:00pm

Rules and Elections – Steven Barnhart:

The committee conducted its business by e-mail this month as logistics problems prevented them from meeting at HSC as planned. The committee has selected the June and October recipients of the Staff Monthly Recognition Award. The October recipient is from the HSC and had twelve letters of nomination so the committee wanted to have the presentation made at HSC so many of the nominators could attend. Steve encouraged members to continue to nominate their fellows for the award. Upon receiving some information from Personnel Services the committee will be filling the empty seats on the Assembly.

Rights and Responsibilities - Ruth Scott-Williams:

The committee met on April 11, 2006, in the Lucas Center. They are continuing work on the Reference Sheet with a particular goal of listing helpful telephone numbers that are not part of a phone-tree. They will be getting copies of the New Employee Handbook to see what information it contains. They continue to monitor the situation with the Child Care Center. It appears that the communication between the Center and the parents is improving. The results from a recent survey regarding issues and features of the center should be out shortly. The next meeting of the committee will be June 9, 2006, in LUC 206 at 12:00 noon.

Transportation - Wade Thompson-Harper:

The committee met on April 13, 2006, on the HSC in PSC 701. President Michelle Jones attended as a guest and Andre Gaines from Transportation Services was the guest speaker. Two members of the committee, Ruth A. Johnson and Corliss Bennett, have tendered their resignations from the Assembly. Wade reported that he hasn't yet met the new Director of Transportation Services, Ian Sephton, but is hopeful that he will do so soon. Andre Gaines spoke about the Campus Cruiser program which receives over 500 calls per night on both campuses and is staffed by 89 students. They have recently implemented a walking escort program to alleviate the sometimes long waits when the cars are very busy. New MTA passes will soon be available which will be authorized for the entire year eliminating employees needing to update them each month. The next meeting of the committee will be May 16, 2006, in UGB 110 at 12:00 noon on UPC.

Guest Speaker: Maryalice Jordan-Marsh, Associate Professor of Social Work was introduced by Lois Nishimoto. After some preliminary comments by John Gaspari, Director of the Staff/Faculty Counseling & Consultation Center (soon to be re-named the Center for Work & Family Life), Professor Jordan-Marsh spoke about nurse social work practitioners are becoming involved in the workplace as companies are coming to realize the medical costs are only a small, albeit important, part of the basic health and productivity "puzzle." There is a trend to align benefit incentives to encourage self-responsibility on health issues on the part of employees. As an example, the old model of encouraging employees to come to work when ill is changing as the effects on that employee's productivity as well as the productivity of other employees with whom the ill employee comes into contact are seen to be detrimental. This type of problem is now being referred to a "presenteeism" as contrasted with absenteeism. The result of this new view is that company's "bottom line" interests can be complimented with the employee's health interests.

Next Meeting: Michelle announced that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 1, 2006 in SSL 150 on the University Park Campus.

Adjournment: Without objections on motion by Paul Flores seconded by Wade Thompson Harper, the May 2006 Assembly meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m..

Minutes submitted by: Steven Barnhart (Parliamentarian) in Secretary Jackie Mardirossian's absence