

Meet NUSAC



Spotlight on SJ Murray

SJ has been at Galter Health Sciences Library for 21 years in a variety of positions and is currently the cataloging assistant in Technical Services. She works with books, and assists with several affiliated libraries on the Chicago campus and special projects.

How long have you been on NUSAC?

This is my fourth year. I served on the Communications Committee, was the Secretary last year and I am currently chair of the Human Resources Committee. I was interested in NUSAC's activities for some time and submitted an issue for the 1999 State of the University address. Someone I'd never met but exchanged e-mail with asked me to consider membership and the Chicago Campus was underrepresented at that time.

What do you get out of serving on NUSAC?

A broad perspective on the functioning of the Univer-

sity and the chance to meet and work with a diverse group of highly committed staff.

What do you like to do outside of the office?

I'm scraping paint off woodwork in a vintage condo. I like the results more than the process. My interests include art, architecture, gardening, classical music and traditional jazz.

Any suggestions for other NU staff?

Look for opportunities and take advantage of what the University offers – skill training, financial workshop, etc. Make yourself read the fine print on your insurance coverage once a year.

To learn about becoming a member of NUSAC, visit our website at

<http://www.northwestern.edu/nusac/index.html>

Difficult People con't

- When a person hears a message indicating he or she "should," that the message ought to be translated into perceived options for action – either "I want to" or "I don't want to" do what the other party believes I should. The awareness of individual choice is key.
- Conflict and communication in the workplace are affected by factors including intimacy levels, "emotional bank balance," power differentials (a key concept for supervisors), control needs, disparate agendas, cultural and value differences, gender, and even "intangible" variables which may be completed unrelated to any aspect of the work environment.
- Learning to "tap in to the likeable" or finding an area of agreement as a base for beginning interactions that may be difficult.
- Using privacy, a calm demeanor, and acknowledging positive aspects of a situation that appears difficult.
- Recognizing that language has great effects on messages. Word choices and body language may adversely or positively affect communication. Gossip is detrimental.
- Learn to "just say no" to unacceptable communications or behaviors.

Strategies for addressing difficult situations included:

- Refusing to allow one's sense of self to be negatively affected by the actions or communications of others (rude or excessively critical supervisors, co-workers or customers.)
- Remaining acutely aware that the only behavior one can control is his or her own behavior, and never that of others.
- Consciously prioritizing and selecting which problems are to be confronted or ignored.

The outline of these two brown bag meeting is available online at: <http://www.northwestern.edu/nusac/perspectives-brownbag-1.pdf>

NUSAC invites staff to contribute ideas for Brownbag and newsletter topics to:
nusac@northwestern.edu

To learn more about NUSAC, visit our website at
<http://www.northwestern.edu/nusac/index.html>

NUSAC

Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council

December 2002



University Improves Childcare Benefits for Staff

Now is a great time to take another look at the childcare programs NU offers to staff members. These programs are designed to assist staff in finding the best childcare options and to help with some of the costs of childcare. As a result of a year-long study many improvements that NUSAC has long advocated have been implemented this fall.

Improvements in the childcare resources include:

Katie Krauch has been hired as the new childcare coordinator. She will be working with area childcare providers to develop affordable programs. She will also be available to assist NU staff, faculty and students in finding the best childcare to meet their needs.

The MCGaw YMCA Childcare Center in Evanston has been designated as the preferred childcare provider for the university. This new relationship means that spaces have been reserved in the center for faculty, staff, and students and that the university is offering funding to the YMCA that will enrich the programs they

currently offer. The university is also offering financial aid to families that use the YMCA to help cover tuition costs.

Matching funds available through the FSA program to help cover childcare expenses have been increased from a maximum of \$2500 to \$3000. These expenses can include daycare, after school care and other costs associated with childcare. This matching money is in addition to the tax savings that come with the FSA program.

The income limit on FSA matching funds has been raised from \$70,000 of annual household income up to \$80,000, increasing the number of families eligible for this assistance.

For information on these programs and how they can help you, see the Childcare, Family Resources, and Work Life website at: <http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/childcare/> or contact:

Katie Krauch
Coordinator, Childcare, Family Resources, and Work Life
847-491-3612
k-krauch@northwestern.edu

Perspectives Offers Help with Difficult People

In a followup to a workshop offered in spring of 2002, NUSAC's fall Brownbag featured a speaker from the University's Faculty/Staff Assistance Program. Jeff Blaine, Director of Clinical Services for Perspectives, Ltd. presented "Don't Get Crazy Get Smart, Part II – In the Workplace". Total attendance for the workshops on the Chicago and Evanston campuses was about 75. Members gathered for continued discussion of problems and strategies for difficult

workplace interactions. Some of the topics included:

- Developing and maintaining awareness and understanding of other people's realities and how they differ from one's own.
- Awareness that problems between individuals are normal and that response to problems is mitigated by many factors. The American cultural aversion to conflict can be particularly problematic.

INSIDE

NU offers Mortgage Assistant

Employee of the Year 2003

Safe Ride Shuttle

Did You Know?

NU Offers Mortgage Assistance

Northwestern continues its relationship with First Bank & Trust, a locally owned community bank based in Evanston, for mortgage assistance that services faculty and staff. For all faculty and staff, the bank offers discounting on interest rate for primary mortgage loans of up to .25%, depending on the product selected by the borrower. The \$275.00 application fee is waived to the borrower. Any staff employee or faculty member can go directly to the bank to inquire about these features.

For current or newly recruited tenure-track/tenured faculty, and for newly recruited staff employees who move to the Chicago metropolitan area from another region of the country, the University can act as a guarantor on a second mortgage. This is useful if the borrower has less than 20% to put forth as downpayment. If the borrower can put down 10% and get a primary mortgage from the bank for 75% of purchase price, the remaining 15% of purchase price can be put into the form of a guaranteed second mortgage (which is at a preferred interest

rate). Since NU signs a guaranty document for the second mortgage, the bank then is willing to waive the private mortgage insurance (PMI) payment that a borrower would otherwise have to pay each month. The Office of the Senior V.P. for Business and Finance approves each guaranteed second mortgage case after conferring with the bank. The bank also offers bridge loans at preferred pricing for current or newly recruited faculty and for newly recruited staff who move to this area.

First Bank & Trust's main office is at 820 Church Street. The Manager of the Mortgage Loan Department is Ms. Lynda Ancell, who can be reached at (847) 733-7400. Mr. Mario Rodriguez is also available as Mortgage Loan Officer and can be reached at the same number. The liaison with the bank at Northwestern is Ms. Janie Savage, from the Office of the Senior V.P. for Business and Finance. If you have general questions about the mortgage assistance program, please feel free to call Janie Savage at 1-5534 and request a brochure.

Shuttle Offers a "Safe Ride"

Increased safety for staff has been made available on the Chicago campus. Since April there has been a late-night shuttle service called "Safe Ride" that is available for staff, students, and faculty. However, this service is a pilot program that requires NU community members participation to ensure its continuation. The Safe Ride, designed to enhance safety when traveling at night near campus, is free to faculty, staff, students, and their guests as long as someone displays an active WildCARD ID to the driver.

The shuttle will be especially convenient for employees working late hours. The bus stops include the Red Line train station at Chicago and State, Michigan Avenue for access to cabs and the CTA, campus parking lots and other on campus locations.

The Safe Ride service was recommended by a subcommittee of the Campus Crime Committee that focuses on Chicago campus safety concerns. The group has representatives from University Residential Life, CAPS, Facilities Management, University Police, University Services, Human Resources, Women's Center, School of Law and the Feinberg School of Medicine.

The subcommittee was formed to address issues specific to the Chicago campus such as campus lighting, emergency phones, an escort service and safety response systems.

The committee's recommendation for the late-night shuttle was

approved as a pilot program by the administration, and Senior Vice President for Business and Finance, Eugene S. Sunshine provided funding through December 31.

The handicapped-accessible shuttle will run Monday through Friday from 8:40 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. except for University holidays.

The shuttle bus will make stops at these locations approximately every 25 minutes, depending on weather conditions, traffic and number of riders:

- Ward Building
- 375 Chicago Ave (Law School Atrium)
- Lake Shore/Chestnut
- Chestnut/Michigan
- Chicago/State
- Lot C/University Police
- Abbott Hall (Superior Street)
- Lot D/Ontario Garage
- Fairbanks/Huron

The schedule and shuttle stop information can be viewed at:

<http://www.univsvcs.northwestern.edu/Parking/saferide.html>

For questions, contact: University Services at 3-8129 or University Police at 3-8314

Quick Takes

Brownbags Offer Staff a Simple Way to Get Benefits Information

NUSAC hosted two Brownbags during November that focused on employee benefits. Total attendance for the sessions on the Evanston and Chicago campuses was approximately 60, which allowed for a great question and answer session. Tom Evans, Director of Benefits, Cliff Cornelius, Benefits Counselor and Katie Krauch, the new Coordinator of Worklife, Child & Family Resources, were the guest speakers.

The speakers were able to answer many questions that staff had regarding the flexible spending accounts (FSA), prescription drugs and life insurance options. Significant information was provided to clearly explain how the FSA dependent care coverage works.

Staff members found the brownbag to be very informative because it further explained the many benefits offered by the university.

NUSAC urges staff members to be constantly aware of the benefits that are available. Visit the Benefits website, <http://nuinfo.nwu.edu/hr/benefits/>

For additional benefits information, staff may contact NU counselors at (847) 491-7513 or e-mail the Benefits Office: benefits@northwestern.edu

Notables

Employee of the Year 2003

Nominations for Employee of the Year 2003 are currently being accepted in the HR Training & Development Department. Each year, NU selects an Employee of the Year for both the Chicago and Evanston Campus. The award winners are announced each spring at the Employee Recognition Luncheon. Along with the Employees of the Year, this luncheon honors long-term NU employees as well as those named as finalists in the Employee of the Year selection process. Those who earn Employee of the Year honors receive a plaque and a \$1000 savings bond.

NUSAC encourages you to take this opportunity to recognize deserving staff members in your area.

To find out more about the Employee of the Year awards, including information on eligibility and the nomination process, please visit the Employee Recog-

inition web site. To find it, use your internet browser to go to the NU Home Page. Then:

- Click on A-Z
- Click on H,
- Click on Human Resources Development Division
- Click on Employee Recognition – Employee of the year.

or go directly to:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/development/Service%20Rec.htm>

Nomination forms are available for you to download on the site. A form can be mailed/faxed to you by requesting it from Judy-Mitchell @northwestern.edu or call 491-7509.

Please submit completed nomination forms to Judy Mitchell in the HR Development Division no later than January 24, 2003.



Chicago Campus Employee of the Year, Kathleen Harris



Evanston Campus Employee of the Year, Ethel M. King