

NUSAC

Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council

Winter 2008



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MISSION STATEMENT

NUSAC is a group of volunteer staff members appointed by the President to represent employee concerns to the University administration. NUSAC solicits input, investigates concerns, and addresses issues with the University administration. The Council formulates recommendations and advises in decision-making processes regarding matters of concern for staff. NUSAC is dedicated to maintaining a positive work environment for staff and promoting excellence within the University community.

2008 State of the University Address



On Thursday, February 21, 2008, President Henry S. Bienen gave his annual State of the University Address to a standing room-only crowd of faculty and staff in Baldwin Auditorium at the Robert H. Lurie Medical Research Center on the Chicago campus. About 120 people attended the address (as well as about 20 people at the live webcast in Evanston at the McCormick Tribune Forum); in addition, at least 370 people watched the broadcast online from their computers. The address was co-sponsored by the Office of the President and the Northwestern Staff Advisory Council.

The president discussed finances, focusing on the growing endowment, the use of the endowment to provide financial aid to graduates and undergraduates, the substitution of grants for loans for the neediest students and a cap on the amount of student loans. He described the academic initiatives in Qatar and noted select achievements of Northwestern's individual graduate schools, the opening of the Prentice Women's Hospital and planned construction of the new Children's Hospital, an increase in applications for admission, and other building construction or renovation on both campuses, including a planned new building for the School of Music. The President also referred to the recent test of the emergency notification system, Department of Information Technology initiatives, and success in increasing the University's research volume. The achievements of some faculty, students and staff were also recognized.

After the address, the floor was opened to questions for the President. Faculty and staff could submit questions through the NUSAC e-mail address, write their questions on index cards to be asked by NUSAC members or go up to the microphone to ask their questions directly. Topics of questions ranged from performance review to benefits, from Lyrica revenue commitments to Northwestern's responsibility to its communities, from salaries and raises to communication and staff morale.

To see the text of the President's speech, visit:
<http://www.northwestern.edu/president/addresses/08state.html>.

Join NUSAC!

The Staff Advisory Council currently has open spots. To be eligible to apply, you must be a staff member and a University employee for at least two years. To learn more about joining the Council and to print out an application, please go to our website:
<http://www.northwestern.edu/nusac/aboutnusac/join.html>

Northwestern's "Unsung Staff" Highlight

NUSAC would like to acknowledge the contributions of unsung staff at Northwestern. With that in mind, we will be interviewing individual staff for the newsletter to introduce you to some of your fellow dedicated employees at the University that you might not have had the pleasure to work with.

Gail Rosenblum is an administrative assistant for the Medical Dean's office and has worked for the Feinberg Medical School in that position for 25 years under five deans. Her cheerful attitude and vast wealth of knowledge accumulated throughout the years make her a "go-to" person for the FSM Dean's office.



What is one of the most challenging situations you have faced and how did you overcome it?

A terminally ill patient came in and wanted to donate his body to the Feinberg Medical School. I gave him the information for the Anatomical Gift Association and since I had a contact to someone on their board, I called and asked them to get in touch with him so it wouldn't just be a handful of paperwork to fill out. He was able to talk with someone personally that day. The situation helped me see how the Medical School deals with healing and mortality and put a personal face on the job. It also made me realize that sometimes it's not just "a job" but a chance to make a difference for someone in a very difficult situation.

When you are not at the University, what do you do for fun and relaxation?

I love spending time with my family. My oldest daughter and her husband have two sons and are also in the process of adopting a little girl from China. My younger daughter has a daughter of her own who will soon be 10 years old. The other things I love doing are reading murder mysteries and beading. I frequent several gem shows each year and plan on going to the one in Tucson next year.

What do you think would benefit staff either in your school or university-wide?

Good communication with supervisors is key to a good job performance. People need to understand that a job description is not just the list of tasks you perform but also your interactions with others.

Where do you like to go with your co-workers to lunch?

The Saloon Steakhouse on Chestnut.

Why do you think Northwestern is a good place to work?

The benefits are good, especially the way that sick time accrues so you can use it if you actually need it. Northwestern also gives people a chance to grow if they choose to take advantage of the opportunities here.

How have you taken advantage of the other benefits/ events/ organizations here?

When my kids were growing up, I used the tuition benefits. I am a member of the FSM Staff Relations Committee that sponsors 3-4 events a year, such as Art in the Atrium and an annual Breakfast for FSM Staff. I also help with Alumni Weekend and participated in the Lurie Cancer Walk.

Has there been anyone here that you feel has been especially beneficial to you as a mentor, an inspiration, or a colleague? How?

Through the years I have been here I have met many people who inspire me. There have been too many to list. I try to take advice from everyone and implement them in my daily life. One thing that I learned is not to lean over a paper shredder if you are wearing a tie. Though that does not apply to me, perhaps some of the other employees will benefit from this.

Do you have a motto/ words of inspiration for the Northwestern community?

People should think before they say things, be sensitive to others feelings, and hope that others realize you have feelings too.

If you know an "unsung" staff member that you think deserves recognition, please send us contact information at nusac@northwestern.edu to nominate them for an interview.

University Resources for Resolving Issues

Northwestern staff members have a variety of resources to call upon when a difficult situation arises in the working environment. There are several paths and resources available to reach resolution, but of course each situation is unique and the resources accessed should depend upon the circumstances of the situation.

1. Try to resolve the issue directly with your co-workers and managers. Remember to stay focused on facts and don't emphasize personalities.
2. Guidelines for university policies relating to workplace behavior can be found in the staff handbook, downloadable as a PDF on the HR site. (<http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/forms/oncampus/handbook.pdf>)
3. The University has eight human resource consultants; four on each campus. Their job is to help both managers and non-managers perform their roles well. Call HR to find out who your consultant is: Chicago: 503-8481 Evanston 491-7507.
4. The University also has experts who focus on particular areas:
 - For matters related to sexual harassment contact S. Leigh Jeter, director of the University Sexual Harassment Prevention Office: 847-491-3745, l-jeter@northwestern.edu, www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment/policy/index.html
 - For matters related to non-sex-based discrimination or harassment contact Pamela Pirtle, director Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and Access: 847-491-7458, p-pirtle@northwestern.edu, www.northwestern.edu/hr/eo/
5. You can also go to Ethics Point (<http://www.northwestern.edu/ethics>). This site is not a substitute for, nor does it supersede, any existing reporting methods or protocols in place at NU for reporting suspected problems or complaints, but is an additional simple way to report activities that may involve misconduct or violations of University policy. You can file a report online or call 866-294-3545 to report various workplace violations. The site does have the ability for anonymous reporting, but of course if the violation is of a legal/ safety issue nature, more information will be needed.

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Service Excellence Awards

On January 17, 2008, an appreciation luncheon was held in Evanston to honor 69 University staff members, from both campuses, that received commendations for providing exceptional service from January 1 through December 31, 2007.

University President Henry Bienen and Pamela Beemer, associate vice president for human resources, commended the staff members for their commitment to delivering outstanding service in their jobs. The Service Excellence Program is one way to recognize staff members that have gone beyond their regular job responsibilities, to assist a student, faculty or staff member, a customer, or to complete a project or goal. To learn more about the Service Excellence Program, please visit the Human Resources Training and Development web site at www.northwestern.edu/hr/training/

We congratulate the Service Excellence Awards winners: Elizabeth Adamczyk, John Afrunti, Hugo Aguilera, Tanya Aspinall, Ellen Barnes, Sabreen Basith, Hillary Bean, Christine Borchures, Valerie Brisky, Brenda Bryant, Diane Bullock, Jane Caires-Lesgold, Ruthann Cameron, Christine Carlton, Jesus Consing, Grant Darktower, Jamal Davis, Vicki Dekker, Julia Dell, Marc Dubey, Sheila Dworak, Pat Dyess, Anne Egger, Ruben Evora, Mahmud Farooque, Nehala Fatima, Michael Fernandez, Bridget Fogelberg, Yvette Freeman, Dave Grosskopf, Elizabeth Haley, Carrie Harper, Will Higgins, Carlton Horne, Svetlana Kiperman, Jason Kruse, Lysa Lei, James Jaeger, Heidi Levin, Peter Livins, Ann Loprieno, Jeff McHugh, Devon McKean, Luanne McMillen, Kim Miller, Kathy Mustea, Thy Nguyen, Eric Odulio, Alan Paberzs, Jenny Pearson, Dennis Petrospour, Jill Pfaendtner, Dan Rademacher, Matthew Ruchin, Nick Seamons, Colleen Seaton, Carolyn Silva, Larry Sklar, Evelyn Small, Allen Stricker, Michael Sullivan, Jeffrey Sundwall, Ann Snyder, Mary Tobin, Latonia Trimuel, Joan Trimuel, Sandra Usher-Longworth, Josephine Williams, and Beverly Zeldin Palmer.

WildCARD Discounts!

Did you know that your WildCARD entitles you to a variety of discounts at local restaurants, shops, and even for events? Visit <http://www.univsvcs.northwestern.edu/WildCARDAdv/> for the latest list of discounts!

NU Staff Advisory Council 2007-08

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Health and Benefits Fair Survey

NUSAC distributed a short survey at the health and benefits fair on each campus so that we could find out how you felt about some of the recent topics of discussion concerning the university. Here's what you had to say:

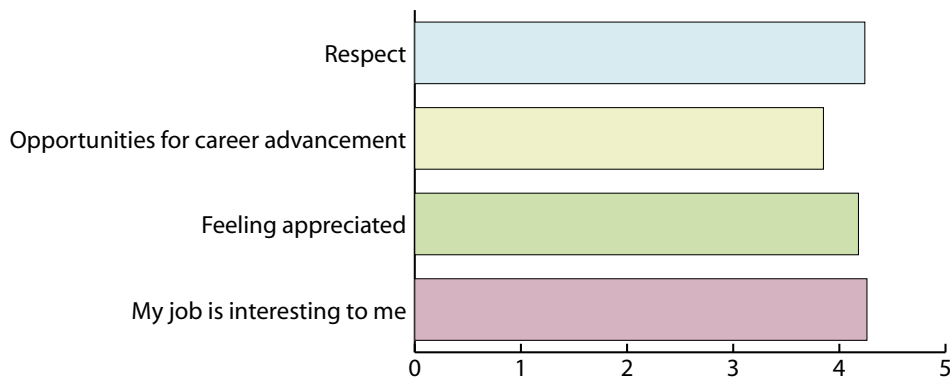
- 52 percent felt that the changes in the NU health care plans didn't impact you at all. 31 percent thought that the impact was a positive one.
- 81 percent continued with their same plan from last year and are satisfied.
- Staff reported that the most important areas relating to job satisfaction were respect (54 percent), an interesting job (50 percent), and feeling appreciated (48 percent). There were some comments about the salaries offered by the University as well as flexibility of time.
- An overwhelming 65 percent of you want to receive the NUSAC newsletter electronically!
- Even though quite a few of you heard about the NUSAC sponsored events that were listed (69 percent), only a fraction of you actually attend (25 percent).

More detailed results will be posted at www.northwestern.edu/nusac soon!

Survey Highlight

Rank the following in order of importance to you regarding job satisfaction (1= least important, 5= most important)

Average responses:



NUSAC Newsletter in Print

Based on the results of NUSAC's Health and Benefits Fair Survey, we are distributing this issue of the newsletter via e-mail. If you want a print copy, or know coworkers who don't have regular access to e-mail, you can pick up a hard copy of the newsletter at the Technological Institute, Bursar's Office, or Norris University Center on the Evanston Campus and Abbott Hall on the Chicago campus.

W-2 and Tax Information

By January 31, 2007 all employees should have received their 2007 W-2 Form. The layout of this year's form is the same as last year's. The W-2 Form will be a four-up horizontal mailer, folded and pressure sealed. This year all Wage and Tax Statements (W-2 Form) will be sent to the same address as for paychecks. In most cases, this will be the department's address. If you have not received your W-2, please contact the Payroll Department at (847) 491-7362.