Message from the Co-Chairs
by Janet Amador and Rita Pearson

Reflecting upon the first semester of being Staff Council Co-Chairs we can't help but be appreciative of the time and energy that your staff representatives have put into making your home away from home a better place to live. There have been many conversations about activities, proposals, and next steps but the Council is always keeping YOU as the center of the conversation and making sure that the direction we go is in your best interest.

Aside from the speakers to our monthly meetings, Staff Council members have been actively working on the following issues:

- Extending the tuition remission program to include the doctoral education program is scheduled to be reviewed by the College cabinet.
- Council members are currently serving on the Staff Recognition Committee chaired by Human Resources.
- Several key issues with position source documents, including staff not being officially recognized for supervising student staff, are scheduled to be reviewed by the College cabinet.
- The bylaws have been updated to officially include Brothers as eligible nominees to the Council.
- All monthly Council meetings now include a 30-minute open forum for staff to address any issues of interest.

We are also very pleased at the level of engagement that we have experienced from the administration and their interest in our concerns. There is a great synergy that has been established by our predecessors that we continue to enjoy. Staff Council's success requires your involvement. Consider running for office this spring or attending a session.

Nominations Open in March
Think about nominating yourself or a colleague for Staff Council. Nominees must have worked for the College for at least three months as of July 1st, 2014. Read on for more information.

Spotlight on Staff
Read about your colleagues in our monthly online column. Do you know someone who is in the spotlight? Read on for more information.
Top 5 Reasons to Join Staff Council
by Alle Porter and Audrey Freeman

There are a million reasons to NOT join Staff Council. You have too much work to do. There isn’t enough time in the day to attend meetings. You’re already volunteering on another committee. We hear you. But let us tell you five really BIG reasons TO join Council.

You’ll be a part of a fun and hardworking group of people, and you’ll build relationships with other staff and departments.

Every day you will advocate for open communication among staff and the administration of the College.

You will gain a deeper understanding of the College’s mission, as well as the operational and administrative goals of Saint Mary’s.

Council members develop and further leadership skills through projects and initiatives.

You will make a difference to the growth and welfare of the staff community, because your involvement allows for change on our campus.

Consider joining Staff Council for the 2015-2017 term.

Benefits and Compensation
by Carole Wolf, Scott Logan, Tracey Donaldson, and Latifa Popal

Council members serving on the Benefits & Compensation Committee represent fellow staff on the College’s Employee Benefits Advisory Committee (EBAC). The goal of EBAC is “A re-examination of what and how Saint Mary’s College provides their employees with benefits; the vendors, the offerings, the budget and the competitive needs of the community.”

Along with the College’s Employee Benefits Consultants; the Human Resources Department; and College Vice President for Finance, Pete Michell, EBAC worked towards making this year’s open enrollment period a successful one. Preliminary data indicated that there was not a substantial change in enrollment, and feedback gathered at the Benefits Festival in December indicated that both faculty and staff were quite pleased that there were no increases to insurance rates for 2015. Employees are also interested in wellness initiatives, including but not limited to, continued pilates and yoga courses and access to the new Alioto Recreation Center.

1 EBAC Agenda, dated February 13, 2014
September Poll: Tuition Waiver
How many staff have used, or plan to use, their tuition waiver benefit?

NOTE: A total of 24 staff members responded to the survey.

October Poll: Backup Dependent Care
Would you, or someone else you know at the College (including students),
use on-site (or nearby) child care if offered by Saint Mary’s?

NOTE: A total of 20 staff members responded to the survey.
Position Source Documents

by Sara Mumolo and Alle Porter

During the open forum at the Staff Council meeting on January 13th, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, Eduardo Salaz, gave a presentation on staff position source documents. This presentation addressed several key misunderstandings:

**Myth #1:** Employees are not key contributors in the position source document evaluation process.

*Fact:* Employees also have joint responsibility regarding position source document re-evaluation.

**Myth #2:** Most revised position source documents result in a title, grade, and salary increase.

*Fact:* Approximately 30% of revised or re-evaluated position source documents result in salary adjustments.

**Myth #3:** The volume of work is a key criteria in securing a revised position source document and salary increase.

*Fact:* The volume of work is not a key criterion.

**Myth #4:** The Human Resources department is the only decision maker in position source document re-evaluations.

*Fact:* The Human Resources department has a strong consultative role in determining position source document re-evaluations. Survey data and manager input also play key roles.

If you have any questions about your position source document and the work you do for the College, please contact the Human Resources Department at (925) 631-4212.
Reflections from Campus of Difference Workshop Facilitators

by Sunny Bradford

In August 2013, 12 staff and faculty attended a week-long train-the-trainer program delivered by the Anti-Defamation League. This program was the first step in their preparation to become new facilitators of Saint Mary’s A Campus of Difference (COD) workshop. These individuals joined the ranks of six veteran facilitators who have been facilitating the program since its adoption in 2009.

Now, 16 months later, what do three of the newer COD facilitators – Diane Bianchi (SOLA), Tammy Appling-Cabading (Leadership Studies) and Grete Stenersen (Collegiate Seminar/Leadership Studies) – have to say about their experience so far?

Diane: “When you do these workshops, everyone is in a different place in their understanding and personal experience. Being able to meet people where they are is important. A lot of learning starts at the micro-level, person-to-person, and that can open minds and hearts.”

Grete: “Something that stands out for me is how committed we are as a team of facilitators. When we meet as a whole group or plan and co-facilitate together, the depth and passion that people have is amazing. We represent both staff and faculty; a variety of roles, departments, backgrounds, and experience. That’s one of the strengths of this team.”

Tammy: “I’ve enjoyed developing relationships with people that I normally wouldn’t have access to.

Because of the diversity of the facilitator team, I actually feel more integrated into the SMC community. Also, being a COD facilitator has helped me feel a part of something bigger.”

Diane: “Now when I see the news or hear about experiences of our students, faculty, and staff, I realize there’s a lot I didn’t see before, even though I consider myself an open and engaged person. There’s so much to learn, so many layers to understand.”

Grete: “When I think of the learning goals of A Campus of Difference program and the goals of the College Committee on Inclusive Excellence (CCIE), this work strengthens the warp and weft of the campus community as a whole.”

Tammy: “My experience has reinforced for me the importance and relevancy of this work – the need to have this type of ongoing training for our staff and faculty. We have people engaging with each other and asking to have more opportunities like this. That’s part of what fueled our desire to add the Inclusive Excellence Mini-Workshops.”

Note:

In addition to facilitating A Campus of Difference workshops, the facilitators meet monthly to deepen their knowledge and facilitation skills, share ideas, and plan Inclusive Excellence Mini-Workshops (90-120 minute programs launched in May of 2014 to augment, but not substitute for, the full-day COD program).
November Poll: Professional Development Funding
Would you, or other staff you know at the College, use a staff development fund to apply for professional development funding, if one were established?

- Yes: Number of People Who Responded
- No: 2
- Not Sure: 1

December Poll: Commuter Benefits
Are you using, or do you ever plan to use, your commuter benefits?

- Yes: 33 (42.9%)
- No: 29 (37.7%)
- Not Sure: 15 (19.4%)
Meet Elise Wong

by Alle Porter

Elise loves books, and that’s a good thing. She reads them on public transportation during her two-hour commute to work from San Francisco. She adds thousands of books and other items to the library collection each month as a cataloging librarian at Saint Mary’s. If you visit Elise at the reference desk on Friday afternoons, she will help you find any book you need for your research, professional development, or fun.

Elise is currently serving on the Council’s Bylaws and Elections Committee, working hard to recruit new members and revise governing documents. Elise loves to write, and her love for learning is impressive. She has a Master of Arts in Philosophy from San Francisco State University and a Master of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University. Elise loves being a librarian, but if she ever goes back to school again, she wouldn’t mind being an accountant.

Elise is the past Chair of Northern California Technical Processes Group and the current Chair-Elect of the Technical Services Interest Group of California Library Association. She enjoys working on jigsaw puzzles during her down time and is known to have a stash of cookies at her desk in the library. She loves working at Saint Mary’s. But her happiest place of all time? Disneyland!

Meet Elise and other members of the Staff Council at the next meeting. The Council meets monthly on the second Tuesday at noon. Meetings are generally held in Hagerty but check the website for more information.

http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/staff-council