

KU THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

Support Staff Senate



Summer 2011

A Letter from the President

By Dennis Constance

As I make my campus rounds in the wee hours of the morning, I often listen to the news on NPR or the BBC. I like to compare what journalists from outside the US have to say with what those from home are saying.

A few days ago I heard a story prompted by all the natural disasters that have befallen us over the past few months. The subject was how to evacuate people with special needs when some emergency like a fire, or flood, or severe storm damage, makes it necessary. Not only is it necessary, but it often has to happen quickly. Moving people with varying types of physical and mental limitations is just not as simple as saying, "Come on, get in the car. We're going!" As it turns out, Missouri and Kansas both have plans in place to address such problems, but there is much concern among responsible officials that not

many of the thousands of eligible citizens have signed up.

It struck me as ironic that, here in Kansas at least, we have been busy slashing the budgets that are meant to provide day-to-day support to these same special needs populations. On the one hand we are making an effort to save these individuals from rising flood waters, but on the other hand letting the rising tide of living costs swallow them slowly.

You don't have to be a special needs person to know how this feels. It may hit them first, but it will eventually reach us all if things keep going as they are. Indeed, for some of our lower-paid peers the waters are already well up their legs. About to the level of their wallets, I'd guess.

It is for this reason that I want to add my voice to the article elsewhere in this newsletter about The

Huron Group and their activities on campus. The thrust of their efforts is to find savings that will give KU — and that means us, not just the administration — more options for achieving excellence as a place to study and work. As the Provost has pointed out in his most recent eNews, the heart of accomplishing that goal is quality faculty and staff. This means that we should avail ourselves of every opportunity for input. The product can only be as good as the data and effort that goes into creating it.

If you haven't been to a town hall meeting, go to one. In fact, go to as many as you can. At least 5 more in addition to the original three have been scheduled. One of us may have THE idea, or ask THE question that is the difference between being swallowed by that rising tide I mentioned before, and holding it back.

Dennis



Dennis Constance
President, University
Support Staff Senate

New Website Content

By Tammy Barta

Our website now lists information regarding items that affect each of us as it is released from the legislature. Look for links on the University Support Staff Senate (USS) homepage (www.uss.ku.edu) throughout the legislative session.

Other information located at our site include names of USS Senate members you may contact at any time regarding questions or concerns you may have.

All Full Senate meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend. The

calendar of meetings is also located on the site. We also currently have vacancies on Senate. If you are interested in serving, please contact our Vice President, Chris Wallace at ewallace@ku.edu or 785-864-3097.

Inside this issue:

<i>Employees of the Month</i>	2
<i>KPERS Study Commission Information</i>	2
<i>Upcoming Important Dates for Staff</i>	3
<i>Huron Group Update</i>	3
<i>Did You Know?</i>	3
<i>Center for Online and Distance Learning</i>	4

Support Staff Employee of the Months — Congratulations!

June 2011— **Carol Sloan**, Civil, Environmental & Architectural Engineering

May 2011—**Gloria Prothe**, Department of Mathematics

April 2011—**Judy Bachman**, Facilities Operations, Custodian Services

March 2011—**Sandy Robison**, Department of Student Housing

February 2011—**Kay Isbell**, Department of American Studies

January 2011—**Wendy Bridges**, Office of the Chancellor

December 2010—**Beverly Herrman**, Facilities Operations Housekeeping

November 2010—**Lori Whitten**, Department of English



The next employee of the month could be you or a co-worker! Nominations may be made by contacting HR/EO at 785-864-7408 for help with the nomination form, or by filing online at www.hreo.ku.edu/documents/alphabetical, select *Employee of the Month* under the letter “E”.

KPERS Study Commission Information

By Mary Ann Baker

Are you worried about the KPERS negotiations? Make your opinion known to the people, listed later in this article, who will be meeting to decide the future of your retirement. The KPERS Study Commission will begin its work to consider pension options soon. Here is the charge to the commission: “The commission shall study and analyze the current KPERS retirement system and systems related thereto, and develop a viable plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of the system. The commission shall particularly study and review the advantages and disadvantages of implementing a defined benefit, defined contribution or hybrid defined benefit/defined contribution retirement benefit plan, or other plan options.” (from the Senate Substitute for House Bill 2194 -- http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2011_12/year1/measures/hb2194/).

A handwritten letter has the most impact, but any contact is better than no contact. If possible, urge friends and family in other parts of Kansas to communicate with the commission members and support your opinion. Remember not to use state time or equipment when communicating with the members of the commission. It’s your retirement and your future, and you should have a say in how that is man-

aged.

Members picked by Brownback are:

Edward Condon of Leawood
He is chief operating officer of Sterneck Capital Management, LLC.

econdon@sterneckcapital.com
816-531-2254
4510 Belleview, Suite 204
Kansas City, MO 64111

Christopher Long of Mission Hills
He is president and founder of Palmer Square Capital Management, LLC.

chris@palmersquarecap.com
816-994-3200
Palmer Square Capital Mgmt, LLC
4200 W 115th St, Suite 100
Leawood, KS 66211

Paul Seyferth of Fairview
He is a founding member of Seyferth Blumenthal and Harris, LLC.

paul@sbhlaw.com
816-756-0700
Seyferth Blumenthal & Harris, LLC
300 Wyandotte St, Suite 430
Kansas City, MO 64105

Richard W. Stumpf of Wichita
He has been with Financial Benefits, Inc. since 1988 where he is a certified financial planner and a certified Employee Benefits Specialist.

advisors@finben.com
316-315-0147
Financial Benefits, Inc.
2400 N. Rock Rd., Bldg 300
Wichita, KS 67226

Brian Winter of Dodge City
He is a rancher and also manages and owns Winter Livestock, Inc.

www.winterlivestock.com
620-225-4159
1414 E. Trail St
Dodge City, KS 67801



Upcoming Important Dates for Support Staff

July 1—Fall Tuition Assistance Deadline—5:00p
 July 4—4th of July Holiday, Offices Closed
 July 11-15—KU Staff summer food drive
 July 29—Last day of summer semester
 August 22—First day of fall semester
 September 5—Labor Day Holiday, Offices Closed
 September 19—20th day of classes
 October 8-11—Fall Break, No classes
 November 4—Spring Tuition Assistance Deadline—5:00p
 November 11—Veterans Day Holiday, some offices closed
 November 24-25—Thanksgiving Holiday, Offices Closed
 December 8—Last day of fall classes
 December 9—STOP Day
 December 12-16—Fall semester finals



Summer Food Drive July 11-15

The KU Staff summer food drive will kick off on July 11. Please consider taking non-perishable items to sites indicated on the flyer at www.facebook.com/HelpKUFightHunger. You may also access the flyer at the University Support Staff Senate homepage (www.ks.uss.edu).

To make a larger impact, consider donating money at www.justfoodfund.org, add “KU Fights Hunger” in the comment field. By donating cash, your money can be stretched farther by the organization than you would be able to accomplish on your own. They are able to turn one dollar into 10 pounds of food!

Huron Group Update

By Ruthie Hatfield

The Huron Consulting Group has been retained by KU to provide a list of possible cost saving measures at KU. The website to view the timetable and mission of the Huron Group is available at <http://chancellor.ku.edu/changing-forexcellence/index.shtml>.

There have been three town hall meetings to date. The first was for faculty and was on May 11 so faculty could attend before leaving for the summer. The other meetings were on May 31 and June 29 and were for the entire University but mainly directed towards staff.

The June 29 Town Hall Meeting was an update and general ideas presented concerning what sort of ideas may be

presented as possible ways to save money, increase efficiency and better support the mission of the University. Visit the website and send feedback to the Huron Group. Consider this like elections, if you don't vote, you can't complain later. Be involved in this process. The names of the employees on the Advisory Committee are on the website. Feel free to send suggestions to that group. All comments will be kept confidential. The recommendations the Huron Group makes to KU could have a tremendous effect on all staff in the future. Talk to your co-workers and attend as many meetings as you can. Administrators have been asked to allow employees time off to

attend a town hall meeting. You can ride the bus for free.

Changing for Excellence Town Hall schedule:

July 26, Tuesday, 8:30-10:00 a.m.,
Budig Hall, Auditorium #110

August 24, Wednesday, 10:30-noon,

Kansas Union, Woodruff Auditorium

September 13, Tuesday, 9:30-11:00
a.m., Kansas Union, Woodruff
Auditorium

October 4, Tuesday, 3:00-4:30 p.m.,

Kansas Union, Woodruff Auditorium

October 27, Thursday, 11:00-12:30
p.m., Budig Hall, Auditorium #120

Did You Know?

There are 1350 support staff employees.

Campus is open to drive through traffic August 1 through August 21.

About 50,000 people a year visit the Natural History Museum.

There are more than 200 fields of study at the University of Kansas.

Helium was discovered at the University of Kansas in 1905.

Legend has it, if you walk through the Campanile before your graduation day, you will never graduate!

The total acreage of the main campus in Lawrence is 410.98.

There are approximately 29,525 trees on campus.

Students at the University of Kansas come from all 50 states and 109 countries!



University Support Staff Senate
33 Strong Hall
1450 Jayhawk Boulevard
Lawrence, KS 66045

We're on the Web!
www.uss.ku.edu



KU launches Center for Online and Distance Learning

Taken from KU News Release—May 18, 2011

A new center at the University of Kansas will assist faculty to increase online course offerings for students on and off campus, Provost Jeffrey Vitter announced today.

The Center for Online and Distance Learning will help faculty design and implement hybrid and online courses identified as priorities by KU deans. The center also will collaborate with campus units to ensure students and faculty have technology training and related resources. Independent Study courses, currently offered through Continuing Education, will be coordinated by the center.

The creation of the center follows a yearlong task force review of the university's distance education capacity.

"Hybrid and fully online courses are an effective way for KU to enhance learning and to expand access to higher education," Vitter said. "By creating the

KU Center for Online and Distance Learning, we are ensuring that faculty members have the resources they need to redesign on-campus courses to integrate technology more effectively and to develop new online courses for distance delivery. Centralizing resources will benefit both students and faculty."

Jean Yoo, director for academic outreach and distance education at Continuing Education, has been appointed interim director of the center, effective May 29. Yoo will report to Barbara Romzek, interim senior vice provost for academic affairs.

"We are pleased that Dr. Yoo has agreed to assume this important role," Romzek said. "Jean's experience will allow the center to quickly move forward to expand and support high-quality hybrid and online courses for students in Lawrence and those at a distance from campus."

Yoo has extensive experience in distance learning, online course development and program assessment. Her broad academic background and experience teaching face-to-face and online courses have enhanced her work with faculty from throughout the university. Yoo has a bachelor's in English and art history from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a master's in applied linguistics from Georgia State University and a doctorate in language education from Indiana University.

The center will employ existing KU staff. No new positions are anticipated.

The Center for Online and Distance Learning will be housed at 1515 St. Andrews Drive in Lawrence. The center also will have a satellite office on main campus to facilitate its work with faculty.