

Highlights from April 2009-present

1. In response to the draft of the Bicycle Policy from April of last year, the Staff Senate made some recommendations to Gary Smith and the Transit and Parking committee based on input from both drivers and bicyclist staff. Transit and Parking worked with the Senate on these drafts, and produced language which allowed individuals to park bicycles in storage rooms/private offices, and encouraged more leniencies on bicycle parking violators in the absence of sufficient bicycle racks. Our legislation on the matter supported a 1 time, lifetime user fee that will directly support the program. But we also passed separate legislation opposing any language in the policy that would require all bicycles to be parked at bicycle racks or loops until adequate bicycle racks and loops are available for bicycle parking.
2. The 11th annual Staff Appreciation Picnic was held on May 21st, at Razorback stadium, and drew the largest crowd of staff in the history of doing the picnic. Our estimates indicate we fed well over 1,000 staff members. All the food this year was completely donated by area businesses and restaurants--First Security brings the grills, and the Staff Senators and our VIP servers, like the coaches and administrators, bring the muscle. We also held our vendor fair which drew about 27 vendors, each one giving out door prizes or donating to the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund. After the picnic, we conducted a survey of staff on campus, and out of 471 respondents, we had an 88% satisfaction rate. We're already preparing for next year's picnic, our 12th, which will be held on May 27th.
3. The Staff Senate created a new award to honor and recognize those employees who work less than full-time. These are the employees for whom little if nothing exists to recognize their achievements, and it was a thrill to finally have that opportunity. The annual award, called the UofA Part Time award was awarded this year to Deborah Haynes, a part-timer working in Mechanical Engineering, who received \$100 and a certificate. We hope to expand this program in the future, perhaps by awarding this honor to more people or by beefing up the prize money. Nominations for next year will be taken in August or late July.
4. Our website got a make-over into Reddot. Since our website it maintained by volunteers on the Senate, and we needed a way to manage our content without knowing a lot of HTML, University Relations was kind enough to redo our site into the University approved Reddot system. We are now able to update the site more frequently and have greater control over its content. We've also updated our URL to <http://staffsenate.uark.edu> so if you have a link to our homepage through one of your

sites, please update it. Stay tuned as we hope to add links to more of our minutes, agendas, resolutions, etc. soon.

5. On October 13th, the Staff Senate hosted a Legislative Panel Discussion in Grad Ed. auditorium where students/faculty/staff were invited to grill a few of our local representatives about state support of the University, including how the Arkansas scholarship program and tax revenue shortfalls will influence the University's budget. The panel consisted of Uvalde Lindsey, Jim House, Sue Madison, Lindsley Smith, and Les Carnine, and it was a great opportunity to just meet the people you may (or may not) have voted for. The event generated a lot of questions, and we anticipate doing this again in the fall next year. I want to thank ASG president Mattie Bookhout and Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Neil Allison, for helping us to get the word out and I hope we can collaborate more on this event next year.
6. Thanks to the faithful and generous contributions to the Staff Senate Scholarship fund, we were able to award five \$500 scholarships this year to full-time staff obtaining their education at the University. As we have announced previously, the Staff Senate is in "endowment building" mode for our scholarship, and this year alone, we have raised over \$5,000 in gifts, which puts us roughly \$9,000 away from our goal of \$25,000. While this is great progress, we aren't there yet, and Annual Giving is going to use the Staff Senate Scholarship as their focus for this spring's next fundraising challenge. Right now, the theme of our challenge is "Give Me Five" which simply urges faculty and staff to give just \$5 payroll deducted to support the people you see and work with every day a shot of getting through college and getting their degree.
7. To emphasize how important this is, this year Dr. Barbara Taylor has asked the campus community to donate to this scholarship fund in lieu of retirement gifts, and to honor her years of service and contributions to campus diversity and equality, we will be awarding specific scholarships to those individuals on campus who contribute to diversity, broadly defined, either by what they do or who they are. These scholarships will continue until fund raised specifically in her honor run out, so please consider donating to our scholarship fund if you haven't already.