

Chair's Corner



During my time at GMU, I have discovered that Mason is a wonderful place to

work. Making it better is up to each and every one of you. Although not a governing body, the Staff Senate strives to foster a good relationship with the administration and passes along your issues and ideas for consideration. If you have a concern or idea that you would like Staff Senate to discuss, please contact us at staffsenate@gmu.edu. We also welcome you to attend one of our monthly meetings!

Given the current economic conditions, we are all under pressure to do more with less. The Senate is continuing to encourage Human Resources to promote the use of non-monetary awards and flexible work schedules; the state is now giving up to \$230 reimbursement for use of public transit; and our tuition waiver allows staff to take 12 credits per year at no charge.

I wish you all a great start to the 2009-2010 academic year!!

- Joey Carls
Staff Senate Chair

Staff Senate

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New Staff Appreciation Day is a Success



Teaming up with Mason Dining was a huge success for the Staff Senate's Staff Appreciation Day. Staff Members at Arlington, Fairfax and Prince William enjoyed a buffet lunch and discussed their concerns with senators and administrators.

Pictured: Left: Mason Dining Staff and Managers. Top Left: Arlington staff members enjoying lunch. Above: Tom Hennessey speaking with a staff member.

Employees of the Month



August: Annette Tallant

Annette Tallant, Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Provost, was the August Employee of the Month. Annette provides administrative and operational support to Provost Peter

Sterns and has worked at Mason for three years. Annette told the Gazette that while keeping up with Dr. Sterns can be a challenge, the variety of tasks in her job keeps it interesting and enjoyable.

To learn more about Annette, visit <http://gazette.gmu.edu/articles/14208/>.



September: Sarah Gingerich

The September Employee of the Month Award went to Sarah Gingerich, Desktop Analyst in Advanced Desktop Technologies. Sarah answers the call when computer problems are too complex for the

ITU Support Center, whether they are software, hardware or virus problems. She has been at Mason for over ten years and has worked at both the Prince William and Fairfax campuses. She told the Gazette that the best part of her job is how happy people are to see her.

To learn more about Sarah, visit <http://gazette.gmu.edu/articles/14407/>.

Communications & Outreach Committee Report:



The Communications and Outreach Committee has hit the

ground running in the race to improve our current award selection process as well as our marketing efforts.

During the month of July, C&O met to discuss improving the process for Outstanding Supervisor Award (OSA). After much deliberation and many suggestions, the committee decided to make some changes to the criteria as well as the process. We will begin implementing some of these changes during the Fall 2009 process, with all changes in place by Spring 2010.

The Committee has also been discussing how we communicate with our constituents. Who are the Staff Senators? What do they do? When are the meetings? Where can I find them? How can they help me? Are all questions C&O would like to answer for you. We are in the process of developing a better marketing strategy, which will include an updated Staff Senate website and more effective publications. We believe these changes will better suit our needs, possibly boost interest in the Senate, and further improve communication between the Senate and the University community.

- Rachel Harrison, C&O Chair

Get Paid to Commute:

Commonwealth Commuter Choice Benefit is like a \$4,700 raise!

If you are a full-time employee, GMU picks up the entire cost of your public transit or vanpool commute, up to \$230.00 monthly. That's \$2,760.00 annually! This is equivalent to a tax-free salary increase. If the same amount were to be given to you as a pay increase, it would actually take \$4709.90 in taxable salary increase to yield \$2,760.00 after taxes.

This benefit can be loaded directly onto your SmarTrip® card or SmartBenefits® Vouchers for use on:

- Metrobus
- Metrorail
- MARC and VRE trains
- ART (Arlington Transit)
- Fairfax's CUE bus
- Alexandria's DASH bus
- DC Circulator
- PRTC-OmniRide
- Fairfax Connector
- Loudoun County Transit
- Montgomery County's Ride-On bus
- Prince George's County's TheBus
- Falls Church's GEORGE Bus
- D&B/Quick's Commuter
- Martz/National Coach Commute Direct services
- Scenic America's Commuter
- Registered Vanpools



Additionally, Commuters in our *Commonwealth Commuter Choice* Program are eligible for our Guaranteed Ride Home program. With a guaranteed ride home, you won't have to worry about being stranded at work if you have a family emergency or have to work unexpected overtime. Furthermore, each commuter participating in the *Commonwealth Commuter Choice* Program is eligible for two (2) free daily parking passes per month to accommodate scheduled doctor's appointments, school visits, or personal errands.

More information is available at <http://transportation.gmu.edu>.

Interested in joining or forming a vanpool, carpool or rideshare?

We have several resources available to help you. We are a member of Go-LoCo (www.GoLoCo.org) and Commuter Connections (www.commuterconnections.org). Or take advantage of GMU's very own George's List. On this website, you can post your rideshare or join one that's already posted. All this with someone right here in the Mason community, as the site is only available to people with a GMU ID. Visit <http://georgeslist.gmu.edu> to get started.



Save at Local and National Vendors With PerksCard

It has been six months since the “PerksCard” was introduced as a new Work-Life opportunity at Mason. Yet many employees still do not understand how the program works and which merchants participate.



The PerksCard is a program that allows card holders to receive discounts at participating local and national vendors. The local PerksCard vendors offer discounts on dining, goods and services including home improvement, event planning, photography and more. Visit the HR/Payroll Work Life discount webpage at <http://mymasonhr.gmu.edu> and click on “myDiscounts” to learn more about the PerksCard program and to search for other current vendor discounts.

Work/life discounts are a great way to cut your costs for everyday spending items without having to clip coupons or sign up for email notifications. So visit the HR/Payroll webpage to start receiving discounts today.



Joey Carls, Staff Senate Chair, presented Susan Riddle of the Psychology Department and Richard Wood of GMUTV with Outstanding Supervisor Awards at the Spring 2009 Outstanding Achievement Awards Ceremony last May.

The winners are pictured here with President Merten who was on hand to congratulate all of the award winners.

Do You Know Someone Who Would Make a Good Staff Senator?

The Staff Senate is accepting nominations for its mid-term election to fill two open seats in Fairfax and one in Arlington. Nominations will be accepted until September 30th and the election will be held October 19-23. All non-probationary classified or non-student wage employees who have worked at Mason for at least one year are eligible.

To nominate yourself or a co-worker, send the nominee’s name, department, phone number, e-mail, and the campus where they work to Sarah Knapp at sknapp@gmu.edu. Call 3-4141 with any questions.

Policies & Elections Committee Report:



The Policies & Elections Committee has been busy discussing various

topics, including the costs and services for staff at campus fitness centers and the Child Development Center, a staff friendly version of Safe Zone Training, and campus smoking policies.

Specifically, we are working with Human Resources and Recreation to learn about changes to services available for staff. Memberships fees for the Aquatic and Fitness Center will increase this year for the first time in 11 years, but new facilities should provide more services.

Also, while the Child Development Center is increasing its rates this year, their tuition remains lower than most private daycare facilities in the area. In addition, there are relatively few non-Mason children at the center, so further increases to their rates would not affect how much Mason employees pay.

Another resource available to staff members looking for daycare is Sittercity.com. Sittercity.com is a networking site where you can find local child care and pet care providers. Mason has a subscription to the site so it is free to Mason employees.

- Carol Ardon-McCullough, P&E Interim Chair

Tuition Testimonial

Cheryl Howe
Academic Advisor
Applied Information Tech.

I have worked as an Academic Advisor for the Department of Applied Information Technology in the Volgenau School of Information Technology and Engineering for about two and half years. I am also a Certified Counselor in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

I learned about the tuition waiver program through other employees that I work with. I decided to use the waiver to take the courses I need to maintain my license as a counselor. The tuition waiver was beneficial to me because I wouldn't have taken any classes without it. So far I have taken a course in Higher Education and plan to take more.

Cheryl started working at Mason in 2006 and has been in her current position since February of 2007.

Human Resources and Payroll Offers Customer Service Certificate Program

In response to multiple requests for customer service focused classes from Mason employees, HR & Payroll's training team developed the Customer Service Certificate Program (CSCP). The goal of the program is to provide Mason's faculty and staff members with training opportunities to enhance and develop their customer service skills. Different training sessions are offered each month at the Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William campuses.

Fifteen different customer service training sessions are offered at varying times throughout the year. For dates, times and descriptions of the CSCP classes please visit <http://hr.gmu.edu/training/cs.php>.

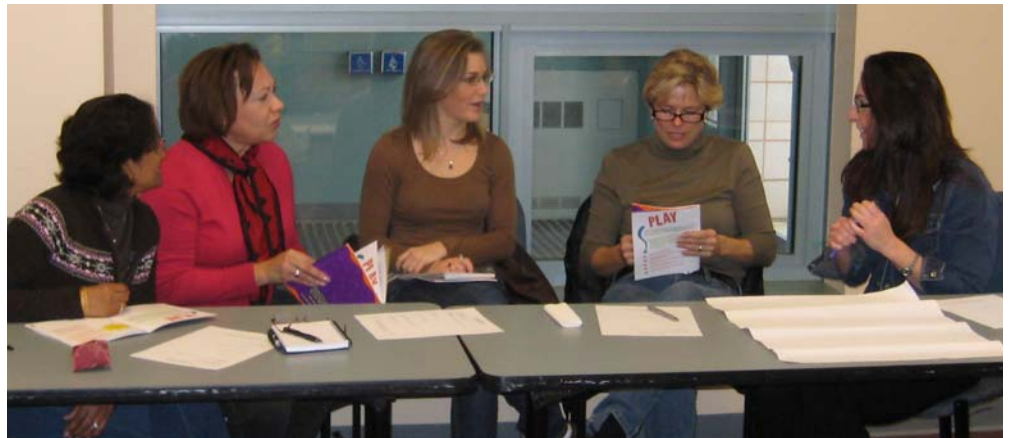
To receive a certificate of completion for the program a participant must attend any six CSCP training sessions. The program started in October 2008 as part of Customer Service Week. During the first year of the program 27 classes have been offered with an average attendance of 15-20 participants per session. In June 2009, 27 Mason employees were awarded the CSCP certificate by Dr. Merten at the annual HR & Payroll training recognition ceremony.



As a result of input from CSCP participants the Advanced CSCP program was created. Employees who received the CSCP certificate can take six additional classes and earn the Advanced CSCP certificate. You are awarded .9 Continuing Education Units for completing the initial CSCP program and .9 more upon completing the Advanced program.

The training team also conducts customized training for different departments. It was the high demand for custom classes focused on customer service that served as the impetus for CSCP. Examples of these customized training sessions include Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Team Building and Customer Service for the Front Desk. If your department is interested in a training session specifically tailored to its needs, please call Lori Ann Roth at 3-2621 for more details.

A new program called Professional Career Development Workshops will roll out in the near future. Courses offered will include three different networking classes and employee engagement classes such as "I Quit but Forgot to Tell You: How to Keep Employees Engaged at Mason."



Using Mason's Tuition Waiver Program: Obtain a Lifelong Sense of Personal Achievement and Pride

What a wonderful benefit we have as Mason employees! You can earn a degree, pursue life-long learning, or enrich yourself personally and professionally by participating in Mason's Tuition Waiver Program. You can earn a Bachelor's or advanced degree or just take a few courses to send your life in a new and different direction. The policy statement, eligibility, academic requirements, and procedures are available in detail online at <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/2209adm.html>.

You must apply and be accepted to George Mason University and meet the same requirements as any other student before using the tuition waiver. The following steps will give you a quick overview of the Tuition Waiver Program and how easy it is to get started.

1. Fill out the online application at <http://admissions.gmu.edu/>
 - On the last screen of the application process, select the tuition waiver option to waive the application fee. The Admissions Department will check your eligibility.
 - Please review the requirements of the program that interests you. Mason has more than 100 degree programs!
 - The University requires an official copy of the transcripts from all colleges you have attended. Non-degree students are required to submit transcripts, also.
 - Carefully check the department website to see what additional information your program requires in your application package. Some will need specialized test scores or department forms. Graduate programs usually require 2 copies of college transcripts, 3 letters of recommendation, and a goal statement. Don't forget to fill out the Application for Virginia-in-State Tuition Rates.
2. The Admissions Department will notify you via US Mail once your application has been approved.
 - Check the status of your application through Patriotweb.
 - Send any missing documents to the Admissions Department of the College to which you are applying.
3. Register for classes via Patriotweb once you have been approved and you have confirmed your acceptance, as required by your program's Admissions Department.
4. Complete the Employee Tuition Exemption Request which is found at <http://hr.gmu.edu/forms/TuitionExemptionRequest.doc> for the credits you want to waive.
 - Full-time staff can waive up to 12 credit hours during the academic year, not to exceed 6 credit hours in any semester.
 - Part-time staff can waive up to 8 credit hours during the academic year, not to exceed 4 credit hours in any semester.
 - Non-student wage staff must work 500 hours to equal 4 credit hours of coursework. He/she can waive up to 8 credit hours during the academic year, not to exceed 4 credit hours in any semester.
5. Submit your completed Tuition Exemption Request(s) to your supervisor for signature.
6. Submit your signed Employee Tuition Exemption Request(s) to Student Accounts after you have registered but before payment due date.
 - Take your forms to Student Accounts at the North Chesapeake Module or send them via campus mail to MSN 2E2.
 - Please remember to make copies for your file!



Let Your Senator Know

The Staff Senate invites you to tell us your ideas, suggestions and comments regarding issues that affect George Mason University classified and non-student wage employees. The information you provide will remain confidential. Please remember that we may not be able to act on comments regarding certain issues if contact information is not provided.

You can contact any Senator directly using the contact information listed on the following page or email staffsenate@gmu.edu.

Staff Senate Mission Statement

The Senate will remain open to all staff comments and recommendations. The Senate will not serve as a substitute for the formal grievance procedures of the University.

The Staff Senate will represent all classified and non-student wage employees by supporting the diverse, multi-campus staff of George Mason University, without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, or sexual orientation.

The Staff Senate will promote honest and open communication between the administration and staff.

The Staff Senate will function, in an advisory capacity, in the governance of the University, by encouraging actions that address the current and future needs of the entire University community.

Staff Senators

First Name	Last Name	Phone	Email	Department	Location	MSN
Carol	Ardon-McCullough	33696	sardon	CEHD	Fairfax	4B3
Norman	Barnes	32819	nbarne1	University Police	At-Large	3D3
Sharon	Bloomquist	31248	sbloomqu	History & Art History	Fairfax	3G1
Joanna	Bosik	32094	jbosik	CEHD	Fairfax	4B4
Joey	Carls	39162	jcarls	Krasnow Institute	Fairfax	2A1
Michelle	Carr	32851	mcarr	Cultural Studies	Fairfax	5E4
Jennifer	Coratolo	39777	jcoratol	CEHD	Fairfax	4B4
Kyle	Ganley	38370	kganle2	University Police	Prince William	4E2
Peggy	Hackett	39526	phackett	CAPMM	Prince William	4E3
Kimberly	Harris	31114	kharrism	College of Dance	Fairfax	3D4
Laura	Harrison	31505	lharrisc	Volgenau School of IT&E	Fairfax	5C8
Rachel	Harrison	33147	rharrisg	Student Centers	Fairfax	5A3
Gail	Hodges	34044	ghodges	College of Science	Fairfax	6A3
Shannon	Hogya	38364	shogya1	Mercer Library	Prince William	4E6
Rick	Holt	34576	rholt2	HR & Payroll	Fairfax	3C3
Sarah	Knapp	34141	Sknapp	Staff Senate	At-Large	2A4
Laura	McCloskey	32092	lmcclosk	History & Art History	Fairfax	3G1
Denise	Napoliello	32171	dnapolie	Robinson Professors	Fairfax	1D6
Erin	Ogilvie	39683	eogilvie	ICAR	Arlington	4D3
Tristan	Pierce	39142	jpierce7	CEHD	Fairfax	4B3
Stacey	Sexton	31384	ssexton	Psychology	Fairfax	3F5
Kevin	Stoy	32132	kstoy	Center for Global Ed.	Fairfax	2B8
Whitney	Sublett	33515	wsublett	ITU	Fairfax	5G1
Kim	Taylor	39764	ktaylor8	University Police	Fairfax	3D3
Toshiko	Uchiyama	33810	tuchiyam	Electrical & Comp. Eng.	Fairfax	2B5