



Minutes for Tuesday, November 10, 2009
The Commons, Room 237

ATTENDANCE:

Present

Alley, Jean
Amos, Stan
Armstrong, Terri
Attack, Becky
Bailey, Bill
Banks, Diane
Barnett, Lora
Boglin, Harriett
Brassil, John
Chapman, Angela
Dean, Mary Ann
DiGiovanna, Sheri
Dixon, Michele
Dubois, Daniel
Fisher, Kristy
Formont, Jamie
Gambill, Jodie
Hiltz, Shirley
Holcroft, Nancy
Houseman, Andrea
Johnson, Faye
Johnson, Stacy
Kiely, Kay
King, Sue
Koval, Kristin
Krueger, Anna Kathleen
Lang, Melanie
Latham, Vickie
Martin, Ashley
McCurry, Barry
McKee, Brenda
McLeod, Laura
McMeen, Ben
Moore, Kenny
Norfleet, Lydia
Owens, Ann Marie
Patterson, JoAnn
Pickert, Don
Rhodes, Katherine
Richter, Andy
Seezen, Karen
Sheldon, Brenda
Showman, Hillary
Smeltzer, Mike
Smith, Donna
Smith, Susanne
Soren, Carol
Soxayachanh, Olivia
Stanard, Ray
Steward, Dan

Street, JJ
Strohl, Sandy
Stuart, Kate
Suttles, Todd
Trenary, Carlos
Tucker, Phillip
Villager, Nyla
Walker, Bryon
Wall, Andrea
Watson-Wienzetzl, Myrna
Watts, Katie
Whaley, Elizabeth
Whatley, Luci
White, Lolita
Whitlow, Cathy
Williams, Tara
Wilson, Cliff
Wyatt, Michelle

Absent, sent regrets

Sumrell, Sharon
Brake, Alyssa
Cage, Vickie
Frierson, Sterling
Wenzel, Alison
Kendrick, Stacy
McGrath, Jason
Thompson, Molly
Pruitt, Don
Pepper, Ronnie
Reynolds-Barnes, Deborah

Absent

Bransford, Chris
Bush, Alison
Collins, Greg
Cribbs, Chris
Dotson, Felicia
Fagan, Shawn
Fisher, Joe
Franklin, Keith
Heath, Eric
Jackson, Nancy
McClure, Cheryl
Palmer, Dave
Pryor, Jessica
Reed, Dylan
Steine, Cindy
Waddell, Rochelle
Webb, Mary

Guests: Melissa Wocher, Jane Bruce, Cliff Joyner, Jerry Fife
Mark Petty, Lenon Coleman, Beth Fortune

8:30 a.m. President Diane Banks welcomed the members, introduced our guests, and called the meeting to order.

MINUTES: The minutes of the October meeting were unanimously approved.

At our last meeting, the Staff Life Committee reported that an inquiry had been made regarding the various discounts for Regional Transit Authority fares provided to employees. Cliff Joyner announced that the discount for university staff would now match that of Medical Center staff. Many options in alternative transportation now exist for Vanderbilt staff and may be found at the website http://www.vanderbilt.edu/traffic_parking/.

Cliff Joyner and Diane Banks thanked Staff Life Committee member, Melanie Lang, for her research on this issue.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Events: Andrea Wall updated the group on our events. The Blood drive is Nov 30th. Michelle Wyatt provided flyers. They asked for volunteers to help the Red Cross staff with registration and snacks.

Andrea updated us on the fundraiser option of breakfast with Santa. Camp Howard confirmed that it would cost close to \$1500 to hold the breakfast which was determined to be too expensive. The Events Committee Plan B, which was discussed with Executive Council, was Kroger gift cards. Kroger gift cards would be purchased by committee members at \$5 a card. The card can then be loaded with whatever your budget allows and USAC will receive 4% on everything spent with the card at Kroger. Anyone who wants to participate can. Proceeds would be for the Hardship Fund. The Council will vote on this project once we receive approval.

Membership: Andy Richter introduced and welcomed the following newly appointed members:

Ben McMeen, Management Information Systems, Group 3

Sandy Strohl, Human and Organizational Development, Group 25

Kay Kiely, Technology Transfer & Enterprise Development, Group 29

Andy reminded members that it is not too late to join standing committee if you are not already on one. All new members were welcomed.

Communication: Co-Chairs Carlos Trenary and Kristin Koval reported that there will be a small meeting after this meeting. They are looking for volunteers for auto-populating of the group lists. The committee has been working on updating images on the USAC webpage.

Rules and Administration: Chair Bill Bailey reported that they had received a request to review elections processes and replacing by-laws but after careful review, they decided to leave the by-law as they are.

Staff Life: The staff life committee Co-Chair Melanie Lang thanked Cliff and his committee for addressing our concerns on the difference in RTA costs and the very successful outcome of his efforts.

UNIVERSITY STANDING COMMITTEES

Benefits Committee: Cliff Wilson reported that the committee met on Mon, Oct 12 and discussed a recommendation for id theft protection. Jane Bruce introduced new members and provided a detailed review of all the programs administered by Benefits, including various options, participation rates, costs and funding for the plans that Vanderbilt offers. The Health care plan makes up 39.66% of employee benefits cost, followed by FICA at 29.24%, and Retirement at 15.89%. In the last year, the Health Care Plan last year cost \$125M.

Traffic Committee: President Diane Banks reminded us not to keep packages, i-pods and GPS in plain view in our cars where they are vulnerable to theft during this holiday season.

Athletics: The Athletics Committee gave no report, as the Committee has not met.

MCSAC: Harriett Boglin, EAP coordinator for Partnering with Parents program, reminded us of the Elf Program. Help is needed to reach their goal of supporting 25 families with food and gifts - making Christmas memorable for Vanderbilt families. If interested in adopting a family, email her. The Council will have an opportunity to help toward a gift card for a family at the December meeting.

Security Council: President Diane Banks sent out a note about pedestrian safety after meeting with Medical Center security. VUPD has tips for holidays at their website <http://police.vanderbilt.edu/>. The VUPD also runs crime statistics which are available to faculty and staff.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to report.

GUEST SPEAKER

8:50 a.m. Chancellor Nicholas Zeppos

Chancellor Zeppos thanked the group for the invitation noting that he remains intimidated and inspired to be introduced as Chancellor. Zeppos spoke to the group about the state of the university and the common passion we have to serve our mission. Some highlights are reported below in the Chancellor's words.

How does the Chancellor judge the strength of the University? First, make sure that everyone is receiving a paycheck! These are challenging times for the great American universities. Our university is doing extraordinary well compared to its peers: Princeton, Stanford, etc. America's greatest and strongest universities are experiencing layoffs, dislocations, and borrowing money to pay bills. They have been shocked by the economic circumstances. Second, I ask, what is the demand for the Vanderbilt experience (working, teaching, discovering, learning, and everything we can do on this campus)? When we look at our mission, do people (graduate students, professors, students) want to be a part of it? We are doing exceptionally well on core business and core mission. We are setting a record in applications for whatever we do: faculty positions, freshmen class, law school, med school, staff position, etc. - many people with diversity and talent are interested. We currently have well over 20,000 applications for the 1500 freshmen class spots. In the mixing of different backgrounds, we are doing better than ever.

We have been doing a fair amount of belt tightening but we only do it when it is in Vanderbilt's best interest. Some parts of university were more affected by it than others, but the university has come together. We are all in this together. Chancellor said he cannot thank us enough for the personal sacrifices made and dedication in these challenging times.

Endowment performance: Vanderbilt is doing better because a) we are not as endowment dependent as our peers: Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and Stanford which are suffering layoffs, early retirements, salary cuts for staff and faculty -- cutting faculty salaries too is unprecedented. And b) our endowment performed better than most. We were -16.3%, not -24% as were our peers. We were favorably 8% points from the mean. We have never seen the sorts of wide variations in endowment returns as we saw this year. Usually if below mean, it's 1.5 point below -- this year there was almost 13 points of difference in performances from top to bottom. Mathew Wright, Vice Chancellor for Investments, beat the average by 7 percentage points, that's 7% of endowment he preserved or \$200M of equity.

Our risk tends to be out of Washington, DC, as we are tied to Medicare, Medicaid, and NIH funding. In reality, we have to tighten our belts, and make tough choices. The good news is that our endowment over performed and we were able to keep our community together. Research funding remains strong at \$70M in the Recovery Act/America reinvest.

Philanthropy was also hit but the drivers of our revenue are tuition, Medicare, Medicaid, and research. We eliminated debt for all undergraduate students. This is not only important and nice, but will serve each of us in the long term when we look back in 10 years and we ask what did we stand for and how strong are we because of that?

Many of the people on our senior management team are "newbies" or taking on new titles. I'm a big believer in internal promotions. We have the very best team servicing a great American university. I have been around a long time and seen people come and go. I have interacted with those at other universities and we've built the most decent, honest, passionate management team in the country. As Warren buffet says you need, "people with a ton of drive, smarts, and great values. The first two without the third will kill you."

Susie Stalcup - DAR from Columbia and Baylor. A good person.

Jeff Balser, Dean and VC of Health Affairs, one of ours, MD grad and PhD from VU, great researcher, great clinical fac member, anesthesiologist and intensive care physician, not easily rattled and not indecisive. Great for management team.

Brett Sweet, Vice Chancellor for Finance & CFO -- an Admiral, looks 16 yrs old. This is a new position; we didn't have separate chief financial officer. The University needs a strong central hand on finances. We have a noble mission; it's just a school but also a \$4 billion operation.

Jerry Fife was promoted to VC for Administration. Has an incredible reputation nationally and on campus. We went through a rigorous national search and he was the best person for the job.

Beth Fortune was appointed Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs about a year ago. Mathew Wright, VC of Investments was appointed a little past two years ago.

David Williams, Vice Chancellor for University Affairs and Athletics, General Counsel & Secretary of the University, and I have been in administration at VU for over 9 years.

Richard McCarty is going on two and ½ years as Provost. He's been at VU for 9 years now.

So, we have new ideas coming in from outside and old pros. This is my 23rd year at VU. The Senior Management Team is a diverse, interesting group. We value each others opinions and other people's opinions. That should happen everywhere at VU. We should ask "what do you think?" -- No matter what your title. What's in the best interest of VU? Focus on that and listening and learning. The management team is great.

VU has been voted one of the best places to work and I am proud of that. I hope that while we did have to tighten our belts, we will remain the best place to work, one of the greatest in America, not just Nashville.

One reason we all work at universities is that there's a certain distance from the real world: yet we are not disconnected. I was a lawyer and loved it but wanted to be on a college campus. I wanted a little space from what the other places I could work might be like. At the same time, however, people say universities are ivory towers, removed from everything else. I am proud to say our mission is to serve humanity; it is connecting to that real world...across the street or in China, Nigeria, or an Indian reservation in AZ. Take it to heart and feel good about what you do. We are here because of what you do.

Chancellor Heard passed this summer. Heard said a couple things that stuck with me:

1) We don't run the university to make money. We make money to run the University. The finances of the university are the Chancellor's first calling. If we are not strong financially, nothing else matters.

2) Our common mission of sustaining and advancing a significant university (not any college) is the most important secular task of the 20th century. Religion aside, the most important establishment (people) in understanding the human condition and improving it are the university. I would say it's the most important task of the 21st century. One can't divide the world into religious and secular. We are engaged in the most significant work for humanity in our century...regionally, nationally, and globally. We have to help solve some of the health care problems. Terrible cancer rates, racial disparities in health care, embarrassing statistics for prenatal care and infant mortality in our own backyard. We need to change that.

\$220M of uncompensated care is provided by our hospitals and clinics. Not only the largest in the region but almost ½ of all uncompensated care. There are a lot of other hospitals near VU but somehow we provide the most uncompensated care. We provide more care in our budget than the city does in its budgets.

Another measure of a great university is Nobel Prize recipients. How many do we have? (see below) I am proud of our many Nobel Prize winners. NIH funding is strong. We have a distinguished record in Earl Sutherland and Stan Cohen in medicine. Stanford Moore from the undergraduate class of '35 - Peabody has a Stanford Moore prize. Max Delbrück, physicist in quantum mechanics and Muhammad Yunus for micro lending. Al Gore never graduated from VU but he was enrolled in Divinity and Law. His teacher got a note, "Please excuse Al from class. He is running for congress."

The Chancellor distributed a handout entitled, "20 Gifts Vanderbilt Gave the World," (see <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/magazines/vanderbilt-magazine/archives/20gifts.pdf>)

Some highlights mentioned by the Chancellor:

- Earnest Goodpasture's work on vaccine. He was the one who realized you could culture large quantities of viruses in eggs.
- We are a site for testing the H1N1 vaccine
- Jim Crowe is involved in the development of vaccine. Flu in 1915 killed 25 M people...he dug up remains and did DNA testing to find it was a variation of swine flu. With work like his, we have gone from fear to vaccine in 6 months.
- Mildred Stallman worked on the first neonatal unit. She still works, dedicated her life to creating a neonatal unit and says, "I want to put us all out of business - we can eliminate 97% of premature births."
- Alternative spring break was begun here. It is now a national experience – the idea of service is broadly identified with VU.

In sum, these are extra challenging times; things are better now than a year ago, but perilous times. Unemployment greater than 10%, was more localized in 80s but this is a national recession affecting so many people. Everything is better but we have to be a little cautious right now, particularly on the construction side. I never thought I'd see the day when construction stopped – It takes a typhoon of a recession for that to stop.

The Chancellor thanked us for everything we do....both new folks and those here for 10, 20, or 30 years.

And he opened the floor for questions:

What are your impressions of the Commons?

I'm biased. I have been working on the concept of the Commons since 1997; was at the first retreat with Brock Williams, Mark Bandas, Johan Madson, and others. What should the Vanderbilt University undergraduate experience be about? We have great

faculty, great classes. Are we warehousing students? David Weintraub noted that we are almost abdicating our responsibility to say we go home at 5 pm and we leave the teenagers alone. What is VU really striving to do? Educate leaders and make better people. Kids die to get into college and then ask who here is just like me? We are proud of diversity but nobody mixes. Why did they come if they are looking for people like themselves? We have a long way to go. The commons is friendship, community, and bringing fac/students/staff together to live and learn. The commons represents the best of our values and the belief of what education should be about. 60% on financial aid, it's scary to send kids to college. All starting together in this community; it doesn't matter what their backgrounds are. Another great university (appearing above us on US New Ranking) is struggling with undergraduate experience. They did a retreat and the first picture on their presentation was the Vanderbilt Commons....what does VU stand for?...diversity, etc.

Q: When are we going to get free parking?

A: Go to the hospital! There is free parking there. But seriously, my hope is that we as a society make progress in mass transit. I didn't have a driver's license until I was 22, didn't have car until 4 months before I got here. It is not in long term interest of our society and environment...we are instead giving free transportation. Parking is always an issue - as the joke goes "What is a great university? A collection of great faculty, students, staff connected by the common problem of parking." 1.3 million patients visit the medical center annually. There has been some ease of parking with 100 Oaks. I don't know that free parking is something I would push. Nothing is free. If we did free parking, it would have to come out somewhere else. Sorry to say that: but it's the way the university runs. You have to ask, what is the most pressing thing that I care about for making VU the best? If you can tell me that parking is the most important thing.....I'd give you my spot. We have to get keener on walking and busing. Get patients off campus so I can pay bills and not go bankrupt.

Tuition goes up 5% a year. Parking has gone up...we keep building more parking. It's like building interstate lanes. It doesn't improve the flow of traffic...it just allows more people to drive that way. A lot more people drive. I hate driving....I'd like to see our society wake up....we fought 2 wars for gasoline. Gas is \$2.50, what is the true cost? Add the wars on top. What does this country stand for? Bad health statistics, hooked on oil, etc. Run for office!

Q: Are you staying physically fit during your term as Chancellor?

A: Yes, and I would encourage everybody to do so. I am exercising a lot, running, taking my cholesterol pills, and seeing my doctor, etc. Exercise makes you a healthier, happier person. Taking care of yourself and feeling good about yourself is important.

Q: Thank you for continuing the tuition assistance program.

A: We're a university. We want to educate people -- that's what we stand for. Another company might say we're all going to Aruba as a celebration: but WE can't invest enough in you, your family, and your education. Tuition benefits cost well over double digits. Who are we, what do we stand for? You can say, "Vanderbilt educated my children." Is this the place people want to be a part of?....not just work here.

Diane Banks thanked the Chancellor and Jerry Fife for attending and for all they do.

10:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned

The next USAC meeting will be December 8th, Rm. 237 of The Commons.

Matt Hall, Vice Chancellor for ITS and Veronica Burns, Senior Director, Human Resources, will discuss Vanderbilt's Electronics Policy.

Jim Kendall, Employee Assistance Program, will talk about the Employee Hardship Fund.

Reminder: All meeting times and locations are posted on the Staff Council website <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/usac/next.html>

Seven Nobel Laureates have associations with Vanderbilt:

Four were academic staff before or at the time of the award:

1. Max Delbrück. In 1942, he and Salvador Luria of Indiana University demonstrated that bacterial resistance to virus infection is caused by random mutation and not adaptive change. This research, known as the Luria-Delbrück experiment, was also significant for its use of mathematics to make quantitative predictions for the results to be expected from alternative models. For that work, they were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1969,
2. Paul Greengard. In 2000, Greengard, Arvid Carlsson and Eric Kandel were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine for their discoveries concerning signal transduction in the nervous system.
3. Earl W. Sutherland, Jr. In 1971, Sutherland received the prize for his discovery of the metabolic regulating compound cyclic AMP.
4. Stanley Cohen. In 1986, Cohen was awarded the prize for his discovery with a colleague of epidermal growth factor.

Two were graduates:

5. Stanford Moore won a Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1972, for work he did at Rockefeller University on the structure of the enzyme ribonuclease and for contributing to the understanding of the connection between the chemical structure and catalytic activity of the ribonuclease molecule.
6. Muhammad Yunus developed the concept of microcredit. These loans are given to entrepreneurs too poor to qualify for traditional bank loans. Yunus is also the founder of Grameen Bank. In 2006, Yunus and the bank were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, *"for their efforts to create economic and social development from below*.

And one was a former graduate student:

7. Al Gore and the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.