

WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR



FINANCE, PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS

Annual Report

2004-05

Submitted by Sharri A. Margraves
June 2005

2005 marked the 30th year of WACFPO and many positive changes have occurred over the past 30 years, from parity in uniforms to establishing a formal mentoring program to the Jack Breslin Distinguished Staff Award and effective supervisory training programs. However, challenges remain with respect to career development and advancement, particularly when staff has been reduced and there is not time nor support for additional opportunities should they arise. Emerging as a larger issue, however, is work-life balance among all employee groups and levels. Flexibility in work scheduling and the constant struggle to balance personal, leisure, work, home, family, school obligations continue to challenge support staff.

The 2004-05 committee is to be commended for their diligence and willingness to take on additional tasks and provide the feedback necessary to advance pertinent causes. WACFPO can be proud of its collective work this past year and I am proud of the dedication and contributions of the committee as a whole, with special gratitude to Pam Weil, Ruth Daoust, Letitia Fowler, and Jill Cruth. I would especially like to thank the Benefits/Work Climate, Health committee and the current chair, Lori Strom, for their diligence in recognizing all former members of WACFPO for the 30th anniversary.

FOCUS AREAS 2004-05

- Member development and recruitment
- Status of Women Project Committee
- Career Development and Training
- Annual Forum and 30 years of WACFPO
- On-going initiatives
 - Equity
 - Flexibility
 - MENTORS
 - Safety Initiatives

- **Member Development and Recruitment**
 - Staff development of the committee was enhanced with the Women at Ground Zero presentation. The event was well attended with very positive responses from the campus and local community.
 - Paulette-Granberry Russell provided an overview of the work in AACM and staff responsibilities.

- Penny Fischer presented a recap of the summer emergency training exercise, current and future endeavors and an overview of lessons learned.
 - Jewel Diamond Taylor, an inspirational speaker, was brought to campus to present positive messages about keeping the main thing “the main thing”.
 - Venice Smith conducted the Winning Balance, a diversity education program for the benefit of the all members. Open dialogue provided a fresh look at biases, values and their impact on work productivity.
 - Recruiting members from labor continues to be a challenge and we asked for specific assistance from HR and Physical Plant in identifying potential candidates.
 - The on-going disparity in web access continues with labor staff. Alternative communication: phone, fax, mail are poor substitutes for email with respect to efficiency and feeling of inclusion for members. The VP may need to mandate access for staff.
 - New members were selected early enough to attend the June retreat that should serve to shorten the learning curve and enhance relationships.
 - Recommend providing WACFPO member’s certificates to commemorate their work with the committee at the conclusion of their service.
- **Status of Women Project**
 - WACFPO had many issues with the survey instrument; primarily, the survey was created and approved by UCHRIS without WACFPO concerns of the instrument being addressed. We hope the data resulting from the survey will specifically assist WACFPO in serving the needs of women support staff. It is recommended that WACFPO consider the continuance with primary research including “Conversations with Kathy” every few years and the creation of a web based survey that would pinpoint key focus areas more applicable to support unit management and staff. It remains to be seen what the outcomes will be for the project. That being said, WACFPO has committed to greater involvement with the process to the end. Current and former WACFPO involved: Strom, Margraves, Monroe, Dean and Weil. To date approximately 400 support staff women responded to the survey, just over 10% of the pool.
- **Career Development and Training**
 - Improvements in Career Development have been noted anecdotally in Physical Plant and through the MENTORS initiative. The challenge remains getting the exposure of candidates outside the

work unit to be considered for various vacancies and preparation for succession.

- It is recommended that the VP continue efforts to ensure that staff at all levels receives the training and exposure necessary to assume greater leadership roles.

- **30 Years of WACFPO-Annual Forum**

- Increased attendance by 33% over 04-05 and a noted increase in diversity of attendees was observed.
- Modified format to allow more questions from the floor.
- Increased electronic communication.
- Continued to see results from the special invitation for women of color. Initiated home mailing to labor staff, results are mixed and recommend continuing a post card mailing again next year.
- Outgrew the space for the resource fair. Resource Fair and networking for departments and individuals is increasing in popularity.
- Recommendation that all Kellogg Center Big 10 rooms be reserved for future years.
- The resource fair may also be a great place for hiring units to participate to show their support of wanting to hire women staff. Beyond marketing services, the Resource Fair can be used by departments to position themselves as a “department of choice” for hiring. It would be an excellent to have information on working in the different areas and provide a contact and opportunity to network between potential candidates and hiring staff, one that specifically targets a diverse pool of women candidates.
- We missed Dr. Poston due to surgery; however, AVP Kathy Lindahl did a great job at handling the program and fielding questions.

On-going Initiatives

- **Equity**

Hynes reported the updated information and the continued review of pay equity. Currently certification and education data is being updated. Recommend continuing an annual update from HR.

- **Flexible Scheduling**

VP support and endorsement of flexible scheduling is requested and will be further discussed in 05-06. The committee recommends flexible work schedules as a way to support the quality of life/work of staff while enhancing the business results of the University. Similar to the Telecommuting Guidelines, developing “Flex

Guidelines” is in process and includes information for both supervisors and staff that can be made available on the web.

- **Mentoring**

- Participation is growing between individual pairs that will require a different format than that used in a unit- based group.
- Participants are reporting successful accomplishments with some indicating that their candidacy for promotion has been enhanced by the MENTORS initiative.
- 63 participants have participated. Participants are on a waiting list due to the need of mentors.
- One current and three former WACFPO members remain committed to the design committee with HR (Herbstova, Zieleniewski, Fischer, Margraves)

- **Safety Issues**

- This fall we focused on several buildings in the outlying areas of campus including ORCBS, Life Sciences, the commuter lot, Bogue street, and several buildings on Service road. Most areas were very dark with the need to add lighting in parking and sidewalks due to the growing traffic in these areas. “Short cuts” continue to be an issue as there is no light whatsoever when staff and students cut through fields. Public awareness/general safety message may help address and change this behavior through HR-Sources, Residence Life and through the colleges that use these areas.
- The spring drive around focused on North campus and found primarily uneven sidewalks and cracked and uneven pavement that present tripping/wheelchair hazards.
- Pam Weil represented WACFPO on the Sexual Assault taskforce.