

YEAR END REPORT – Approved June 15, 2017
2016-17

The Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff (WACSS) is an organization that advises the Executive Vice President for Administrative Services about issues that primarily affect women support staff. The committee's role is to:

- voice staff issues or concerns, or recommend policies, programs, or procedures that impact women support staff employed at Michigan State University
- ensure a productive educational work environment (particularly in areas related to women's concerns), including general issues of campus climate and programs as they affect employees throughout the University
- alert the administration to and recommend solutions for problem areas related to women support staff and other employees at the University
- serve as a liaison between support staff employees and the University administration

The 2016-17 year-end report serves to outline all of the activity and accomplishments achieved by the Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff during the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Summary of Activities:

- **WACSS Vision, Values** – During the August 2016 retreat, Betty Shanahan assisted WACSS with elaborating on the mission of WACSS to also include a vision statement and values. The development of the vision statement in particular helped to shape the future of WACSS and assisted with goal development for the year. They are as follows:
 - **Mission Statement** - The Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff supports a culture of equality, equity, engagement, and inclusion by providing a voice for women support staff at Michigan State University.
 - **Vision Statement** - The Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff will be the leader in elevating advancement and leadership in the MSU Community by empowering and reawakening women support staff through the promotion of equity, education, and advocacy.
 - **Values**
 - Advocate: Serve as a liaison to influence key decision-making at MSU that affects women support staff.
 - Connectivity: Unite women support staff and stakeholders through effective and innovative two-way communication.
 - Engage: Maximize the involvement of women support staff and provide an opportunity to exchange information.

- **Staff Development:** Provide, promote, support, and encourage development opportunities for women support staff.
- **Women Advancement and Leadership Data** – As a result of the planning retreat, WACSS worked with Human Resources and Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives to obtain data related to women and leadership which included a review of general workforce demographics, promotion and degree information, recruitment, and educational assistance usage. The requested data took some time to obtain and evaluate and the suggested areas of focus for the 2017-18 year are:
 - Educational assistance marketing and education
 - Assist with succession planning efforts
 - Increasing minority representation in the workforce
 - Increasing women representation in skilled maintenance and trades positions
- **Annual Spring Forum** - Successfully executed the annual spring forum and resource fair with a theme of “Leadership, Empowerment, and Advancement” on Monday, March 20, 2017, which was attended by over 350 women support staff. This is an annual appreciation event that works to provide interaction between executive leaders and women support staff and provides valuable resources, information, and networking opportunities. Brenda Nelson was the motivational speaker and President Simon, Provost Youatt, and EVP Udpa spoke. In addition, we had an interactive panelist discussion with staff including Sue Petrisin, Jennifer Battle, Shani Feyen, Brenda Nelson, and Therese Nugent (WACSS member) who all took questions and provided advice related to networking, mentoring, and ways in which to advance one’s career. As in the previous year, the event was streamed live and ~80 individuals registered from across the state. We were also able to utilize a new Google voice application that allowed participants to text their questions for the panelists during the event by using their phone. A networking exercise during breakfast allowed individuals to connect with others they did not know and provided sharing of information regarding ways they exhibited leadership and work/life balance in their current roles. Thirty-one vendors were present during the resource fair and provided valuable information to attendees. Following the event, eight individuals were selected as winners to have lunch with President Simon and EVP Udpa at Cowles House which included Maranda Holtsclaw, Leigh Anne Jewison, Sarah Every, Jourden VanArsdall, Xiaoyu Yin, Matea Caluk, Melissa Peek (WACSS Chair), and Elbony Hawkins (WACSS member).
- **Big Ten Women’s Symposium** – As a result of the planning retreat, one of the goals established was to create a forum that brought women’s groups together from all of the Big Ten institutions to share best practices and determine hot topics and areas of interest. An email was sent to solicit interest, however physical collaboration amongst all did not appear to be possible, therefore in 2017-18, the committee may wish to focus on collaborating and sharing of information by way of survey or by utilizing Zoom and include both the MSU Faculty and MSU Student Women’s Advisory committees as well.
- **“Spartans Will” Recognition, Social Media, and Marketing** – Lisa Desprez, WACSS member, nominated the committee on the MSU Support Staff Facebook page for the “Spartan’s Will” campaign for its commitment to empowering women support staff and the

committee as a whole was featured and highlighted on the main page for all to see. In addition, Therese Nugent and Jaci Sayen worked to enhance the efforts of WACSS by creating flyers acknowledging our work. Amy Pinckney also explored the possibility of creating a Twitter page for WACSS but research reflected a poor return on investment and it proved to be too time-consuming to maintain. The WACSS Facebook page currently has 159 likes (up from 90 last year) and we continue to post on a semi-regular basis. It may be worth exploring other ways to communicate to and engage women support staff regarding the work of WACSS.

- **Sexual Violence Advisory Committee** – WACSS has a standing seat on the SVAC and Melissa Peek served as our representative. She kept WACSS informed of monthly meeting activity and the updates to the RVSM policy.
- **TIAA-CREF Financial Workshops** – WACSS sponsored two annual interactive financial workshops in October of 2016 that helped to educate women on the basics of saving, investing, and strategies to enable a more secure financial future. These workshops were sponsored along with Human Resources, the Family Resource Center, and the Women’s Resource Center.
- **Bylaw Revisions** – The bylaws were last updated in June of 2014. Revisions were necessary to properly align the nominating process for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. In addition, minor edits were made to the functions of these positions as well as subcommittee descriptions. Updates were also made to the name of the University Engagement and Membership Subcommittee and Ex-Officio representation from the WorkLife Office (vs the Women’s Resource Center).
- **Union Lounge/Nursing Space** – This space was recently renovated from a women’s lounge to a gender neutral lounge that included a separate nursing space/restroom for women. A protruding sign remains that reflects “women’s restroom” and makes it appear that this space is still only reserved for women. This concern was raised by several WACSS members and was shared with the Facilities Space Management office to address. We suspect signage changes will be forthcoming.
- **WACSS Recruitment** – 46 individuals expressed an interest in joining the committee from the Spring Forum, however recruitment from the labor groups (1585, 999, 324, and 274) continues to be a challenge. Three members represent these labor groups each year and we struggle in finding women that wish to serve. This is an area of focus for 2017-18. The membership committee worked to fill five vacancies and conducted meet-and-greets with all of them. The incoming members include Jackie Vandenbosch, Jonne’ McCoy-White, Amanda Jones, Barbara Heyser, and Pamela Hebler. Thanks to the team as we have a full committee for 2017-18! To continually enhance the process, the membership committee worked to update the membership application and onboarding process.
- **Ex-Officio Engagement** - Continued discussions and interactions with Ex-Officio members including Satish Udpa, Paulette Granberry Russell, Sharon Butler, Barb Roberts, and advisor Christine Carter. Each Ex-Officio provides a variety of updates regarding

activities in their offices and hot topics occurring across the University. Conversations included:

- Healthy Campus Initiative
 - Performance Excellence Program
 - Agile Recruiting and Onboarding – Applicant Tracking System
 - Board of Trustee agendas, activity, and Board member changes
 - Support Staff Facebook page
 - Expansion of on-campus child care
 - Potential tax on City of East Lansing workers
 - Shared services
 - Mobility planning
 - Parental leave
 - Changes to Computer Access & Training Initiative
 - Work Climate - employee engagement survey
- **Lunch and Learn** - Received in-depth education and discussion with a variety of constituents and topics over the noon hour including:
 - Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (John Pedraza & Lisa Johnson)
 - Michigan Sea Grant Program, MSU Extension, and communications (Cindy Hudson)
 - Best Doctors (Joe Galardi)
 - Implicit Bias and Micro-aggressions (Paulette Granberry Russell)
 - HR Educational Assistance and ElevateU (Christy Turner)

WACSS began the year with a full committee of 17 members. Unfortunately Anne Stahl, Stacey Patton, and Katrina Dodson had to resign due to personal reasons and Amanda VanKoevering decided to retire from MSU. Anne Stahl served as Chair for the committee through January of 2017 and the former Vice Chair, Melissa Peek stepped in as Chair following her resignation. Therese Nugent was voted in to replace her as Vice Chair and Wendi Winston served as Secretary.

These members served on the following subcommittees:

Diversity, Pluralism and Inclusion

Terri Geiger (Chair), Melissa Peek, Angela Resseguie, Lisa Desprez

University Engagement and Membership

Debby Mansel (Chair), Therese Nugent, Ninfa Caillouette, Elbony Hawkins

Training, Development and Communication

Amy Pinckney (Chair), Katrina Dodson, Amanda VanKoevering

Benefits, Work Climate, Health & Safety

Jacyln Sayen (Chair), Sherry Stevens, Connie James, Stacey Patton