

# Staff Congress: At-A-Glance

September 11, 2017

## Guest Speaker: Evangeline Day, Disability Services Coordinator

Ms. Day addressed Staff Congress regarding an issue that was submitted as a Staff Concern.

During the first week of classes, someone noticed a disoriented sight impaired student in the area of the ADUC construction and assisted them in getting to Disability Services. Ms. Day encourages everyone to submit incidents such as this so that the issue reaches her. She, and those in her office, do everything they can to keep things like this from happening, but will rectify any additional issue that may arise.

Ms. Day also gave the following advice should anyone notice someone on campus, especially those who appear to be sensory impaired, stopped in the middle of the sidewalk or looking otherwise disoriented:

- It is appropriate to ask someone if they need assistance.
- The majority of sight impaired individuals are trained in sighted guide. If they say yes to your offer of assistance:
  - The person will usually extend their hand to you. Place the back of your hand on the back of their extended hand.
  - The person needing assistance will then slide their hand up and take the guide's arm.
  - While these individuals typically know how to read movements and changes in the direction of the guide, it may be helpful to give prompts such as "there are five steps up in approximately five feet."

Ms. Day explained that MSU has hosted InSight, a one-week summer program for sight impaired students, for the last 11 years. This program brings high school juniors and seniors from across Kentucky to our institution, and while this is not a recruitment attempt on the part of MSU, it has increased the number of blind and vision impaired students we have enrolled. These students have completed Orientation and

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Mobility (O&M) training, which teaches spatial orientation and cane use without sight. Additionally, the Office for the Blind will have trained every Kentucky high school student by the time they graduate.

Should a student choose MSU for their postsecondary education, those students will be trained on their college schedule as soon as possible to allow them to become familiar with our campus. Ms. Day personally meets with these students on their SOAR date, and can assign someone from her office (a Graduate Assistant in the Clinical Psychology program) to assist those students throughout their time at MSU.

In closing, Ms. Day mentioned BlindSquare, much like Foursquare, can help sight impaired individuals navigate campus. MSU has an ADA Task Force that meets twice per semester. Their next meeting, which is open to the public, will be on November 2, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. in Combs 413.

## **Chair Report: Dr. Scott Niles**

Chair Niles began his report by explaining the recent survey sent to all campus constituents as part of the beginning to create the new Strategic Plan. He also expressed his gratitude that Jill Ratliff granted the request to extend the survey deadline. Even with an extra week to complete, there was a response rate of only 11% broken down as follows:

Faculty: 172 responses out of 442

Staff: 310 responses out of 992

Students: 491 responses out of 7,406

Chair Niles also noted that seven Staff Congress Representatives will be participating in the four various subcommittees created for Strategic Plan work. We hope to get monthly updates from these Reps regarding the progress their respective group has made.

## **Vice-Chair Report: Clarissa Purnell**

Vice-Chair Purnell has all Staff Congress information ready to be sent to COMA for inclusion on <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/staffcongress/>. She also plans to ask that Staff Congress be added to the A to Z listing on [www.moreheadstate.edu](http://www.moreheadstate.edu) to alleviate the need for users to enter the complete URL to visit our site.

### ***Benefits & Compensation: Committee Chair Craig Dennis***

\* **Committee Chair Dennis** asked HR Director Nally for an update on insurance and open enrollment for 2018. Director Nally responded that the Benefits & Enrollment University Standing Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, September 13 to hear the proposed rates and plans. Additionally, an RFP will be going out to potentially replace FlexMadeEasy as our FSA/HSA provider.

### ***Credentials & Elections: Committee Chair Margaret LaFontaine***

\* **Committee Chair LaFontaine** reported an incomplete listing of subcommittee members. As such, Rep. John Haky will be added to the Credentials & Elections subcommittee, and Rep. Gwen Sloas will be added to the Benefits & Compensation subcommittee to complete memberships.

***Staff Issues: Committee Vice-Chair Mica Collins***

\* **Committee Vice-Chair Collins** presented the following Staff Issues that were received since the August 2017 meeting:

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/10/2017)\*\***

I would just like to request when HR starts looking at our health insurance options this year that we still be included in the KY Coalition for prescriptions. That has saved me and others a lot of money on our monthly prescriptions. Thank you.

**RESPONSE (received 9/8/2017 from Harold Nally)**

We are pleased with the feedback we've received from employees concerning the service and the savings they've received by our participation in the Kentucky Coalition for prescriptions. MSU will certainly be a participating member in the KY Coalition for plan year 2018.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/16/2017)\*\***

Can the platform to submit comment/concerns be increased to allow an input length of text to more than 500 characters?

**RESPONSE (received 8/16/2017 from April Nutter)**

I've added 2 additional boxes, hopefully that will be sufficient – but if not, let me know and I can add more. As discussed, I also added a line to the form:

“If this form is insufficient to explain your concern, please provide your name and email address and a member of Staff Congress will follow up to address your concern.”

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/16/2017)\*\***

On August 15, a visually-impaired student was lost near the ADUC construction zone unable to navigate the changes that are occurring to the physical terrain of campus. An employee drove the student to the Disability Services Office for assistance. This sounds like a heartwarming story of a campus community pulling together to help a freshman on his first day of school but I see it as a chance to do better. My first immediate thought is campus should be easy to physically traverse (even under construction) without the aid of Disability Service resources or the goodwill of a stranger.

Beyond that, the physical location of the Disability Service Office could be more accommodating for those with disabilities. Are there areas on campus that could be more accommodating to students and visitors with disabilities and what resources do we currently have in order to better serve the campus community and the goals of the Disability Services Office? This incident is an occasion to consider opportunities to improve how we serve our disabled students. Is there a better way to bridge the gap between the responsibility of the student to engage the Disability Services resources and the goal of Disability Services to ensure that the University's programs, activities, services and the campus itself are accessible to all of our students and visitors?

MSU offers an assorted array of disability services to students, faculty, and staff to help navigate the physical and emotional impediments of life on campus. Even though MSU has all of these services available, a gap occurred from the moment the student came to campus until he was delivered to Disability Services. In this case, the gap between drop off and the engagement of Disability Services could have resulted in a very negative outcome for the student and the university.

**RESPONSE (received 8/17/2017 from Evangeline Day)**

For a person who is blind, every new environment will be unavoidably challenging to some degree. When you add in the changeability of construction routing and its noise (listening to the surroundings gives cues to location), our campus is extraordinarily difficult to navigate without sight right now. I certainly appreciate hearing of the deserved concern for the student's safety that is mentioned in this message. It would be fabulous if the mindset of every faculty, staff, and student was to note hazards and barriers and report them to Facilities Management, UPD, or Disability Services right away. Such widespread monitoring, in addition to what those of us in positions where accessibility issues are a daily priority do would help reduce potential risks and foster an even more welcoming campus.

Within the limits of confidentiality, I would be glad to share with Staff Congress the rather extensive assistance that the Disability Services office is providing to this particular student. I hope you will consider inviting me to a future meeting.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/16/2017)\*\***

Many employers, including some state employers, offer an alternate benefit to employees who do not take their insurance because they are covered under a spouse's insurance plan. For example, one of my colleagues covers his wife through MSU; her employer gives her an HRA which is equal to the amount they would have paid for their part of her premiums if she had taken their insurance.

Will HR consider doing the same or similar? Even \$100 a month would be a great help to many and would not cost nearly as much as MSU would have paid for that employee's premium. When an employee doesn't need MSU's insurance and gets nothing in lieu of it, they are essentially "giving up" a benefit worth \$7,560 per year / \$630 per month which seems unfair.

**RESPONSE (given during SC meeting by Harold Nally)**

MSU has not considered giving an alternate benefit should an employee choose to not take insurance as offered.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/17/2017)\*\***

I am concerned that new students are still applying for admissions on 8-17 to not even know if they are accepted for admissions until 8-18. This is one full week into the term. This ONLY sets student in this situation up for a less than ideal and most likely UNsuccessful experience. Not to mention adding stress to staff already trying to provide excellent customer service to all of the other students who are trying to tie up loose ends.

**RESPONSE (received 8/17/2017 from Tim Rhodes)**

According to the university calendar, the last day to register for credit or to add classes is August 21, 2017, so we are admitting students within the university-designated time frame. Therefore, this should not be creating unusual demands of our staff, nor putting students in jeopardy of being unsuccessful. Some of these students were going to another school, but decided to come to MSU.

**RESPONSE from Staff Congress members**

- Rep. McBride – if a student is readmitted due to an appeal, those students are not permitted to register late.
- Rep. Pace – although these students may be admitted within the specified University timeframe, some have already missed over a week of classes. There are some classes (biology, chemistry, etc.) where that week would be difficult or even impossible to make up.

- Rep. Dennis – some advisors have told him that while students can be admitted and/or their schedules changed, there are professors that will not allow late students to make up work that was missed before they enrolled.
- Rep. Sloas – MSU should take a look at the GPA of students who register late. If those students get lower grades, does that then become a retention issue?
- Rep. Fletcher – Some International students have trouble getting their student visa, which is not the student's fault and shouldn't be held against them.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/17/2017)\*\***

Are staff congress meetings subject of Kentucky's open meeting statutes, are they "Open to the Public"? Can anyone come to a meeting an sit in? If so when and where does staff congress meet?

**RESPONSE (received 8/17/2017 from Staff Congress Chair, Dr. Scott Niles)**

Yes, Staff Congress meetings are open to the public and are subject to the same statutes governing university operations. Currently, Staff Congress meetings occur the first Monday of every month at 1 p.m. In Combs 413. We have always encouraged anyone interested to attend meetings.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/18/2017)\*\***

There is a member of staff who works in HM who parks in front of the building every day. I don't think it is fair since I pay \$480 a year to park in reserved parking (which by the way is not right in front of the building in which I work), and this person is parking right in front of the office he works in for just \$180 per year.

**RESPONSE (received 8/18/2018 from Joe Stiltner)**

What type of permit has this person purchased? If this person has provided the Traffic Office with a copy of their Disabled Persons Parking Permit and has purchased an AZ permit for (\$180), then they would be eligible to park in any handicapped space on MSU property including the spaces in front of Howell-McDowell if they're available. However, if this is not what is occurring and this person is in violation of campus parking regulations, I request that the person that submitted this concern contact me directly at (606)783-2363 or [j.stiltner@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:j.stiltner@moreheadstate.edu) to provide details so the appropriate enforcement steps can be taken.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/25/2017)\*\***

I was informed by some students yesterday that their professor locks the door to their classroom from the inside, even before class actually begins. My concern is that if there is an emergency such as a fire, how is this considered a best practice?

**RESPONSE (received 8/29/2017 from Provost, Dr. Steve Ralston)**

There is no policy on this matter. I will put the matter on the Deans Council meeting agenda for review. We will discuss, and eventually bring this our department chairs.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/26/2017)\*\***

Why are we continuing to have difficulties with Datable (Datatel) (i.e. slow response, locked out because of too many users on at one time, staggered levels for registration...etc)?

**RESPONSE (received 8/29/2017 from Steve Richmond)**

Due to the lack of details, it is impossible to respond to this request with any degree of certainty. There are so many components involved in a Colleague session that could have an impact on performance. My recommendation is to report their issue to the help desk for resolution. The help desk can be reached at 606-783-HELP (4357) or by email at [ithelpdesk@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:ithelpdesk@moreheadstate.edu).

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/28/2017)\*\***

Will Anthem's decision to no longer pay for outpatient MRIs or CT scans at hospitals affect us?

**RESPONSE (received 9/8/2017 from Harold Nally)**

Human Resources made contact with our Anthem representative to answer this employee's concern, below is the response:

This program reviews WHERE the radiology procedure will take place. For example, if the preauthorization is for an *non-emergent* diagnostic radiology procedure like an MRI or CT //scan, the utilization team will review the request to make sure it meets medical necessity criteria for hospital based outpatient services. Sometimes there are medical reasons why a patient has to have the service done in an outpatient facility. If it does not meet that criteria, the provider is given alternative options to have the service performed outside of the hospital outpatient setting. If there are no alternative options within a 30-mile radius, then the procedure can be approved in the outpatient facility.

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 8/29/2017)\*\***

As this concern was originally submitted in July and appeared in the August 8th issue but no response was received from Joe Stiltner I wanted to submit again....

Is there any way that we could get more than 2 handicapped parking spots behind Ginger Hall? There are currently two spots now, but also TWO reserved maintenance spots as well. Is there any way that those two spots could be converted to handicapped? The closest handicapped spots (if you can't get one of those 2 directly beside the building) are at the entry to the F/S parking lot behind the library. For someone that suffers/finds it difficult to walk at times, that added distance is horrible.

**Resubmitted to Joe Stiltner 9/8/2017**

**\*\*CONCERN (submitted 9/6/2017)\*\***

Why is it when I connect with the "MSU\_SECURE" option for wi-fi, that it constantly drops off and connects to MSU\_PUBLIC. When connected with MSU\_PUBLIC, emails, texts, etc., DO NOT COME THROUGH. Once I make my choice, I don't understand why it arbitrarily chooses the other, less desirable option. Thanks

**RESPONSE (received 9/7/2017 from Steve Richmond)**

The issue described below is unusual behavior and merits being looked at by a technician. I recommend to whoever is experiencing this issue contact the IT help desk to get it addressed. The help desk can be reached at 606-783-HELP (4357) or by email at [ithelpdesk@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:ithelpdesk@moreheadstate.edu).

***Sustainability Committee***

\*Representative Niehoff had no report.

**Other Reports**

***Staff Regent Report: Dr. Shannon Harr***

Staff Regent Harr was unable to attend, and had no report to submit.

### ***Human Resources Report: Harold Nally, Director of Human Resources***

**Director Nally** stated that his office appreciates the 81% of faculty and staff members who have completed the Title IX training, but noted that they expect a 100% completion rate. He referenced an email from VP Patrick informing the campus that there are KTRS retirement webinars scheduled for Sept. 13 and 14. Rep. LaFontaine noted that there is a recommendation for participants to use a headset with a microphone during the webinar.

Rep. LaFontaine mentioned recent news stories stating that Anthem will be pulling out of several Kentucky counties, including Rowan, and asked how MSU employees will be affected. Director Nally indicated that MSU has not had any conversation with Anthem regarding this new development.

Rep. Savard-Hogge asked if there has been anything else mentioned regarding the spouse surcharge. Director Nally said that while a potential “surcharge” is being reviewed, no decision has been made. He noted that the single-question survey that was sent to targeted employees (those who are currently enrolled in a family plan) was designed to see how many employees could be impacted should the decision be made to enact the surcharge.

### ***Cabinet Report: Beth Patrick***

**VP Patrick** was unable to attend, but submitted the following report via HR Director Nally:

Staff Congress,

I send my regrets for not being able to attend the meeting today but it was necessary for me to attend the CPE meeting held in Louisville today. MSU was on the agenda to present our performance metric data to the Council – something we are required to do annually.

Regarding the suggestion made from Congress regarding “providing HRA funds to employees that opt-out of the group coverage” ... I appreciate the suggestion and we will model possibilities and consider its feasibility as part of the total healthcare program.

The Cabinet has a day-long session scheduled on Friday to discuss a number of budget-related issues including:

- healthcare cost increases
- increases in pension rates which are proposed to increase from 49% to 84% for KERS employees
- revenue projections based on enrollment trends
- potential cuts in state funding in 18-19
- performance funding impacts
- other challenges as well as opportunities that we can see on the horizon for MSU.

I cannot give you a specific answer on your suggestion today but I am hopeful the Cabinet will come to some final decisions on our healthcare plan over the next 1-2 weeks and that we can share those to the Benefits Committee for feedback and ultimately present the final plan to the campus very soon.

At this point, the Cabinet is working very hard to develop strategies and plans that will address our challenges and also position MSU to take advantage of opportunities that can make our University stronger in its ability to serve the needs of our students.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

No old business to report.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

No new business to report.

**CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Friday, Sept. 22 – Sunday, Sept. 24: MSU Family Weekend.
- Friday, Sept. 22: Last day to withdraw from a first-half semester class with automatic “W.”
- Friday, Sept. 29: Fifth Friday at the Rec & Wellness Center from 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. “Eagle Buddy” children are admitted free, all other children under 18 are \$3 per child.
- Sunday, October 1: Browning Orchard Festival.
- Monday, October 2: Next STAFF CONGRESS meeting Combs Building 413 1:00 p.m.
- Cotinine testing and biometric screenings for 2017 WellPoints are available by appointment in the Caudill Health Clinic.
- Don’t forget to check [www.msueagles.com](http://www.msueagles.com) for upcoming MSU athletic events.

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