Hello all,

This is my first communication as president of the University Support Staff. Our transfer became official as of July 1 with a telephone vote of the Kansas Board of Regents. Their vote was unanimously in favor of the transfer from Civil Service.

Support staff received a 1.25% raise in the paychecks for the pay period that began June 5, 2005. Civil Service workers are slated to receive another 1.25% raise at the end of the calendar year. Since we are no longer in Civil Service, we will not get that raise but we will get a 1.75% raise that should show up in our paychecks that come on July 29th. These raises total a 3% raise for all Support Staff with a satisfactory evaluation on file.

It is very important that all staff members check and make sure that they have a current evaluation on file. The merit component of our raises will use that evaluation as part of the consideration for merit increases. It is hoped that decisions on these merit raises will be made very early in the fall semester. The total average raise for support staff should total 4.5% (1.25% plus 1.75% and an estimated AVERAGE of 1.5% for merit.) for this year.

Please remember that the merit component will vary according to decisions made by departmental hierarchy. Factors in making these merit decisions are:

- Performance
- Conduct
- Taking on additional, more complex responsibilities
- Salary compression
- Market Value
- Skill acquisition

As is evident from this list, the decisions to award merit will be more involved than our past salary increase practices. Those decisions will not erase years of extremely limited salary increases and the salary compression on Step 4 that existed for a number of years. The distribution of merit increase will get easier as all involved get used to the process and concept.

I have received several inquiries on improving staff benefits, especially sick and vacation accrual amounts. When discussions were held concerning the switch to Support Staff, it was stated that benefits would remain the same as under Civil Service. SB 74 was passed with that wording so any changes to benefits would require another statutory change through the legislative process. For the present, efforts will be concentrated on getting University Support Staff up and running smoothly. Initial concerns will be salary ranges, wages and longevity. This is not to say that benefits will never be discussed but it will not be in the near future.

As usual, contact me via e-mail at Kjansen@ku.edu if you have any questions or concerns. Also monitor the Senate web site at http://www.ku.edu/~clsenate/. We will be posting the final draft of the Final Appeals Process in early August.

Kathy Jansen

Kansas State Fair

Volunteers Needed (Sept. 9-18)

The university needs volunteers to staff the KU booth in four or five-hour shifts, which is fun and exciting. There are still a few spots open. For more information contact Margay Frederick at mfrederick@ku.edu or Amanda Torbett at torb@ku.edu. A volunteer orientation session will be held in late August.
On July 19, 17 Senators gathered at the Student Fitness Recreation Center on the Lawrence campus for the Second Annual University Support Staff Senate Retreat. The four-hour retreat was facilitated by Keith Russell and Carmen Orth-Alfie, unclassified Library staff. We discussed our role in the continuing transition to the new classification as University Support Staff. Currently, several Senators are working with the Provost and Human Resources to finalize the appeals process.

In addition, we brainstormed for ideas on how we could better communicate with each of our constituents, how the Senate can be more visible, and raise the visibility of the workers we represent in the University Community. Some of the ideas generated from that discussion are as follows:

- Work with the University Daily Kansan and The Oread to get better coverage of staff and Senate activities
- Create a calendar or brochure that features staff in different occupations and departments across campus
- Adopt A Highway on behalf of the staff
- Work with the University Webmaster to have staff featured on the main KU website
- Send a contingent of Senators to work the KU booth at the Kansas State Fair
- Work with the Wheat State Whirlwind Tour organizers to include staff each year
- Initiate a job-trading program between the staff and University administrators similar to the “Chancellor for a Day/Student for a Day” program
- Send a survey to determine how we can better serve the staff and what they expect of us

Later in the retreat, we broke into groups to begin designing a new Senate logo. The goal was to come up with some ideas and parameters that could be given to a graphic design class as a class project. Two professors in the School of Art and Design have shown an interest in having their students work with us on this project. We hope to be able to choose the most qualified submissions and submit the final choices to the entire staff for feedback.

Finally, we wrapped up the afternoon with a general goal-setting session that should give us an excellent base on which to build the next three years. The afternoon was well-spent, as we arrived at some viable solutions for several important issues, which include the above bullets.
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  Ruthie Hatfield  Russell Benke

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WEB SITE UPDATE
  www.ku.edu/~clsenate/
  Please visit our website and feel free to e-mail the Webmaster (clsenate@ku.edu). Your input is appreciated.

HELPFUL WEB LINKS

KU Home Page
  www.ku.edu

KU Staff Benefits
  www.ku.edu/~kuhr/faculty_staff/benefits/

Meeting Schedules For
KU Support Staff Senate
  www.ku.edu/~clsenate

On the menu, select 'Meeting Schedules'. Full Senate meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend.

Visit the Academic Computer Center
  www.ku.edu/acs/  and check out the new Spring 2005 classes and online registration.

KU News, Arts, & Events are available at www.ku.edu/news/.

Look for our new logo and header in the near future
THE NEXT MEETING OF THE KANSAS UNIVERSITY SUPPORT STAFF SENATE WILL BE ON SEPTEMBER 14TH AT 10:30 A.M. IN THE PINE ROOM OF THE KANSAS UNION.

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