

Board of Trustees Report
October 3, 2008
By Faith Olson, CSC Chair 2008-09

Thank you for allowing me a few minutes of your time to talk about the exciting activities/accomplishments/concerns of Classified Staff Council. I hope, as a former teacher and second time as chair of CSC, to say or do something that will help you to better understand the dedication of classified staff employees to BGSU and how that dedication makes a difference to everyone. Thus, the reason for the handouts – a picture is worth a thousand words.

Classified Staff Council organizes and sponsors professional development activities for classified staff employees through presentations by BGSU campus experts on selected topics. Our goal is to improve the lives of our constituents.

We were thrilled when we had to move our September CSC meeting to the theater in this building because of the large number of interested employees who were in attendance. Donna Wittwer provided information on the advantages of Flex Savings accounts and the changes to our health care plan for 2009. This information can help those attendees make wise decisions about their health care, which can result in positive changes in their take-home salaries. The time spent with Sheri Stoll provided an opportunity to ask some very difficult questions about outsourcing, changing of hourly employee positions to contract positions, and the dramatic increase in unemployment compensation benefits. We are very grateful for her willingness to come and address these topics, as well as answer other questions from those in the audience.

Our October through December meetings will spotlight DJ Kern-Blystone's presentations on "Money Matter: 1) How to get out of debt, 2) Setting Up a Budget, and 3) Planning for Large Purchases/Saving for Retirement." These topics seem well suited given the financial status of the country. Dr. Shirley Baugher, Provost, has volunteered to be our guest in October, with Dr. Ed Whipple coming in November.

Another one of our initiatives was to give a copy of this book (Leading to Build Great Teams, Aim for the Heart) by Tom Mathews to every CSC representative. CSC representatives are to read the book and within 30 days give their copy to their supervisor and have a short conversation during that meeting to discuss ideas or thoughts that impressed the reader. The supervisor has 30 days to read the book and pass it forward to his/her supervisor with a short conversation. The pattern is repeated all the way up the supervisory line until the book is eventually handed to the vice president over each area. President Cartwright will receive her copy through her office staff. Once at the VP level, we would be elated to have each vice president personally return the books to the CSC representative to whom the book belongs. The book may then be shared with co-workers.

You will be able to experience what CSC is attempting to accomplish in facilitating a positive atmosphere in changing times through cooperative team building by

sharing this book with those who serve with you on this Board. [Give book to Board Member]

We are reintroducing the Building Blocks to the Future campaign in an effort to further enhance a more positive atmosphere by potentially touching every classified staff member on campus through appreciation statements. This was instituted during my term as chair of CSC in 1997-98. After 11 years, some individuals who received the first Building Blocks still have them. We have been able to put the plan into place again with partial funding from the College of Education and Human Development to help cover the printing costs. We are still seeking additional funding assistance.

After all these wonderful opportunities, one item that classified staff employees looked forward to having settled through a Board of Trustees vote was the CSC Political Activity Reform recommendation; however, the process wasn't completed in time for inclusion in today's information. Even though this political year is probably one of the most exciting of the century, classified staff members are restricted in how they can participate. You will notice on this sheet (show sheet) there is a list of permissible and prohibited activities for classified staff employees. Several statements have been highlighted for your review. Participation in prohibited activities could lead to termination. (See Ohio Revised Code 124.57) We look forward to having these restrictions modified through your vote in December, along with the Catastrophic Leave Program.

My time is almost up, but I wanted to address a statement that Mr. Levey made during his meeting with us. He told us he left BGSU with the determination to change the world. He left with a dream of making a difference.

His statement concurs with one that Carl Sandburg made, "Nothing happens...but first a dream." I believe this philosophy is alive and well today at BGSU. When students graduate from BGSU, they leave with a dream. The other side of that coin is many individuals come to BGSU to not only gain employment, but also to fulfill a dream of making a difference in students' lives (either directly or indirectly) through job responsibilities, service and/or mentoring in and outside the classroom. Those student/BGSU employee associations are long remembered. A recent example of this is Mr. Levey's first visit back to campus. He made it a priority to visit William Schurk, the supervisor he worked under while a student employee on campus. For them, the 37-year separation was minimized by the remembrances. Many BGSU graduates return, especially during this time of Homecoming celebration, to relive those memories. I'm certain there are 10's of thousands of such stories like Mr. Levey's of administrative staff, classified staff and faculty who are remembered because they made and continue to make a difference in students' lives. That commitment to make a difference is an integral part of the positive culture of BGSU. May it live forever and grow stronger. Thank you.