Message from UWSA President

As I approach the end of my third month as UWSA President, I’m starting to settle into the routine of meetings, committee work and more meetings. As I said at my remarks at the AGM in October, it is a time of change for staff, and my own experience in the last three months is no exception.

At the AGM the UWSA Executive said goodbye to outgoing Directors Marta Bailey and Chantel Franklin. Their contributions to the Executive Committee and university-wide committees are appreciated and they will be missed. Congratulations and best wishes to Chantel and her spouse Mark who welcomed a new baby boy, Dexter, on December 6, 2010.

The UWSA welcomed re-elected Director Darlene Ryan as well as two new directors: Sheila McConnell and Jeremy Steffler. They have been busy “learning the ropes” and becoming involved with committee work. Sheila is the Treasurer of the UWSA and Jeremy is working with the Communications and Membership Committee. And there is another change in the executive to report: Robert (Bob) Bernard, who had been on the executive since 2009, retired on January 1, 2011. The executive has appointed Monika Bothwell to fill the vacancy until the next AGM in October.

One of the roles that I enjoy as president is the monthly meetings with the Area Reps. This is a group of people from around campus who get together once a month to discuss issues of concern with the executive. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings, which are held on the second Thursday of each month. If you need more information, please contact me or the UWSA office. Over the next few months I hope to expand my meetings with staff by holding lunchtime sessions across campus, to hear from more people about their concerns and successes.

An important theme in my remarks in October concerned the challenges that staff will face with the changes in the workforce. We have seen changes in several senior administration positions recently and that is bound to have an effect on staff. The aging of staff, as baby boomers approach retirement, is also going to have an effect. However, the goals of the university, as defined by the Sixth-Decade Plan, haven't changed. I see the current environment of change as an opportunity to make improvements in the way we do our jobs. The role of the UWSA in this environment is important. While we cannot tell departments or business-units how to “do their job”, we can ensure that staff policies are being adhered to and, through the activities of the Staff Relations Committee, we can be the agent for change to policies that aren't working.

In November, I attended the departmental meeting in CECS where they unveiled the plans for a major reorganization of that department. In December I also attended a similar meeting at a smaller business unit. This kind of involvement lets the staff association provide independent oversight to organizational change.

Someone commented to me the other day, “well, the president of the staff association doesn't have any real power – you're a figurehead.” And I admit there's truth in that statement. As much as I'd like to, I can't wave a wand and make things happen. On university committees like SRC (Staff Relations Committee) and PACSC (Provost's Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation), I am but a single staff voice among many. What I can do is talk to people, bring issues of concern to the attention of the administration and improve communication. If there's one thing I have learned in the last three months, it's that communicating is important - small problems can be prevented from becoming large problems and good ideas can be brought to light.

And so, with that in mind, I invite you to let me know what you're thinking. What's bad and what's good about working here? What do you think should change? And what should remain? Send me an email at: uwsa.president@uwaterloo.ca.

Trevor Grove
President, UWSA
YOUR CAREER: HOW TO BE READY FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES

You never know when a career opportunity will grab your attention. To prepare for unanticipated opportunities, you can spend time determining not merely the job titles you’d like to pursue, but also the skills you want to use, the impact you’d like to have through your work, and the values you want to put into practice on the job. If you’d like help with those activities, please feel free to schedule a confidential appointment with me through the Centre for Career Action website (www.careeraction.uwaterloo.ca). On a nitty-gritty level, though, it also pays to familiarize yourself with uWaterloo’s new e-recruiting system recently released by HR.

If you haven’t yet had the chance to explore mycareer@uWaterloo, you can review videos on HR’s site, or log into myHRinfo to request a training workshop or to get your hands dirty by creating a profile. Both the online videos and the in-person training offer two options: content for applicants, and content for hiring managers. Obviously, the content for applicants is useful for anyone applying within uWaterloo. Less obviously, the content for hiring managers will also be useful to you. For example, through training resources for hiring managers, you can find out whether résumés and cover letters can be scanned for key words (they can, but that doesn’t mean they will), or whether the entire hiring committee will automatically see your answers to all questions in the online application (they won’t but everyone will see your résumé and cover letter).

Knowing how the e-recruiting system is used will help you to make sure the hiring committee finds all relevant information about you. Your knowledge can help you from being overly modest when compiling your information or from editing essential information from your résumé and cover letter.

Building a profile now is another smart time investment. To build a profile before you’re interested in a job, just log in, and choose “Careers” from the “Recruiting Activities” menu. Then, choose the “Apply Now” button without selecting a specific job posting. You’ll be asked to upload your résumé as a first step, but you can later replace that résumé with ones targeted to your jobs of interest. For now, though, uploading a résumé will unlock questions about your past experience. By answering those profile questions now, you won’t be faced with the time management challenge of targeting a résumé and cover letter while also trying to remember exact details about previous dates of employment.

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UWSA Workshop: LinkedIn

Wednesday, February 23rd and Thursday, February 24th:
12:00 noon - 12:45 p.m.

Location:
Engineering Multimedia Lab (CPH 1346)
Note: No Food or Drink are permitted in the lab.

LinkedIn: Not Just for Self-Promotion

We’d all like to be able to get advice quickly from people in our field, research career options, and stay in touch with people we’ve met. Some of us would also like to make our job search easier, reach out to new people, or establish our expertise in a wider community. Developing and maintaining an active professional network is valuable not only in helping us connect with resources to perform our tasks more effectively, but also in ensuring that we can identify and capitalize on career advancement opportunities. Searching for jobs through advertised job postings is no longer as effective as it once was. Nurturing personal networks is fast becoming a key factor in career success. LinkedIn provides a means to do all of this and, this February, the staff association is offering an easy introduction to this network of over 85 million professionals.

On Wednesday, February 23rd and Thursday, February 24th, the Staff Association will host a two-part LinkedIn workshop facilitated by Staff Career Advisor, Liz Koblyk. The workshop is aimed at staff members who are not yet comfortable using LinkedIn, who are not sure why to use LinkedIn, or who want to use LinkedIn with only a minimal time commitment.

Both workshops run from noon until 12:45 to allow participants to have a quick bite before returning to work. Those who can stay until 1:00 will have more time for hands-on practice and to ask questions. Wednesday’s session focuses on using LinkedIn for research and networking and Thursday’s session looks at building a personal profile and an online reputation. Participants need not have built a profile in order to attend the sessions. That said, staff members are asked to log into www.LinkedIn.com in advance to create an account, and to remember their user name and password so they can log in during the workshop.
I have just come to the end of my term as the Member-at-Large for the Staff Relations Committee, and I look back over the last few years with pride. The Staff Relations Committee is mandated to manage concerns and issues that affect staff working conditions. This can mean anything from addressing university policies governing staff employment to discussions on how the Sixth Decade Plan impacts staff and everything in between. The committee itself consists of people from the staff association executive, the University of Waterloo administration (including the Provost and the Director of Human Resources), and one Member-at-Large from the university committee. All specifics regarding matters considered are confidential, but I would like to share some general observations.

One of the major accomplishments during my tenure on the Staff Relations Committee was an updated version of Policy 18: the official University of Waterloo policy that addresses Staff Employment. Originally, only the section of the policy governing funding-contingent positions was brought to our agenda. These discussions resulted in a re-consideration of the fairness of the existing policy, and changes were proposed. Proposed amendments made their way into a written memo which was presented to Executive Council and accepted. While the process was ongoing it became apparent that more sections of Policy 18 were outdated, unclear, or no longer relevant. Members proposed a complete overhaul. The results of which were finally confirmed by all parties and made public this past September (http://www.secretariat.uwaterloo.ca/Policies/policy18.htm).

Although I managed to recap the process in a very short paragraph, that summary does not tell the whole story. I would really like to stress the collaborative environment of the Staff Relations Committee that allows for, and encourages, open discussion on matters brought to the table. All issues, whether large or small, receive the same attention by members. The nature of some portions of Policy 18 may have appeared to favour either members of the staff, or the university administration, but everyone on the committee could comment or add information.
Staff Enhancement Grant Sparks a Healing Quest

Striving for knowledge and a deeper understanding of what it means to be human, Cheryl Suitor, an administrative coordinator for computer science undergraduate studies and a local artist, has spent the last few years learning the art of energy healing. Now, thanks to the Staff Enhancement Grant (SEG), she is embarking on a quest to “send much needed healing back into the world.”

Cheryl’s original interest in energy healing, a complementary therapy where practitioners facilitate a transfer of universal healing energy to help others, started when her father was very sick with cancer and the medical doctors didn’t offer a lot of hope.

“He hated the hospital and hated being sick. In desperation, I frantically searched for someone with the knowledge to save his life. This led me to see an energy-healing practitioner who worked in palliative care for cancer patients. Although my father never opened up to the notion of this alternative therapy, I was very impressed and moved by what she taught me. I never forgot her,” she says.

Years passed by and Cheryl still felt drawn to the teachings of this woman. She knew she needed to learn more. Soon she signed up for Reiki training: a form of energy therapy originating from Japan. “It was a very powerful experience and, once again, the teachers inspired me a great deal. Not just in terms of healing, but also in how they approached life, spirituality, and our connection with the earth, each other, and the universe.”

Cheryl went on to practice Reiki with her friends and family members; however, she found that when she went to volunteer her techniques in the community, that, like her father years ago, not many people were open to the idea of this unconventional therapy.

Then she met a Therapeutic Touch teacher who was working and teaching at Hamilton’s General Hospital. Therapeutic Touch, like Reiki, is a system of energy healing that is more widely accepted within the mainstream medical community.

In spring 2010, Cheryl applied for the SEG to assist with the cost of taking practitioner courses from this teacher. She was “ecstatic” to learn that she received the grant and admitted that she was afraid she might not get it.

“I was afraid that since energy healing is not widely understood and practiced in our society that the staff association may not see it as a valuable endeavor. They did not judge me though. They seem to understand that our personal journeys are powerful ones and the energy we give out to each other throughout our journeys is just as important.”

She plans to use her new knowledge “to volunteer Therapeutic Touch to others in our community” and to express this spiritual energy in her artwork.

“I see my paintings as a transfer of both internal and external energy onto the canvas—a mixture of my personal experience and the world around me. I may not even truly recognize what the painting is about until I have completed it and then a ‘title’ usually comes to me.” A title, she says, is never an ending though. It is just another beginning.

Sheila McConnell, School of Computer Science Director, UWSA

Painting by Cheryl Suitor: Inner Spirit.
FALL AND WINTER SOCIAL COMMITTEE EVENTS

UWSA 6th Annual Erie Shopping Trip
November 12-14, 2010
A group of 43 staff members, family and friends joined us for this successful trip. This is the second time that the UWSA ran their own trip without using a booking agency. We received very positive comments and feedback for future use in planning the 2011 itinerary. We have booked next year’s trip for the weekend of November 11-13, 2011 to Erie, PN. Stay tuned for the announcement as once again we will only be taking one bus.

Thanks to hosts and organizers Peggy Day and Sue Fraser!

UWSA 17th Annual Craft Sale
November 25 and 26, 2010
The Annual Craft Sale was once again very successful. Ten percent of all sales and the raffle amounted to $1089.00. This amount will be equally divided between the UW Senate Scholarship Fund (University-wide) and the UW Staff Association. Thank you to everyone who assisted with the sale and to the staff and departments who donated items or assisted with the raffle. Also thanks to New Media Services for the printing of the flyers. Thanks to organizers Sue Fraser and Kelly Wilker-Draves!

Undergraduate Award winners
Each term, undergraduate awards valued at $500 each are provided to deserving full-or part-time undergraduate students in a degree program at the University of Waterloo. Award recipients have contributed to the university or the community through extracurricular or volunteer activities and have a minimum overall average of 70 per cent. To be eligible for consideration, a student must be a current member of the staff association or be the child, spouse, grandchild, or dependent of a current staff association member. This award is sponsored by the UW Staff Association and the Education Credit Union. Congratulations to the Student Award recipients from the fall term:

Leah Payerl: Leah is completing an Honours BA, SDS, with an English minor. She is the daughter of Mary Lyn Payerl in the Institute for Quantum Computing (IQC).

Erin Kadwell: Erin is completing an Honours Legal Studies major and Political Science minor. Erin is the child of Pat Kadwell in IST.

Marie Leung: Marie is in the Biomedical Sciences program. She is the daughter of Bosco Leung in Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Winterfest 2010
December 12, 2010
This event was a lot of fun thanks to the hard work of organizer Joanne Voisin. Over 300 people attended. Staff with their families and friends came out for skating, crafts and face painting. Of course one of the main attractions for the children was receiving presents from Santa. Thank you to Joanne and all those elves who volunteered their time to assist her with this event.

Joanne Voisin with her helper daughter Libby, sitting on Santa’s (John Askin) knee.

Special Initiatives Fund (SIF) due March 31st
The SIF is part of the Staff Excellence Fund and was created in 2009 by the Provost’s Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation (PACSC) to support special projects suggested by staff in the university support group. You can download more information and an application.

Check out all 2010 projects.

SKI CHICOPEE!
Full day lift tickets $26 for UWSA members
(regular price $40)
Tickets are available at the UWSA Office, DC 3603. Tickets also available from Kelly Wilker-Draves (NH 2027) and Sue Fraser (BMH 1110)
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING STAFF WHO WERE HIRED OR PROMOTED

July to December 2010

New Hires

Justin Yates, Kinesiology
Alison Gelata, CBET
Mark Meinzinger, University Club
Barbara Forrest, CEMC
Thomas Barber, Office of Research
Jennifer Calbery, Waterloo International
Matthew Leask, Federation of Students
Tammy Kim, Housing & Residences
Jeremy Dufour, UW Police Services
Tracey White, Human Resources
Chris McClellan, Mech & Mechatronics Engineering
Jamie Wheeler, Propel
Darla Steinman, Propel
Michelle Hollis, Human Resources
Kenton Needham, Human Resources
Jennifer Ranford, Office of Research
Margaret Johnston, Dean of Engineering
Sue McGrath, Human Resources
Rodell Salandananan, Institute for Quantum Computing
Ben Garcia, Federation of Students
Brian Bailey, Registrar
Gillian Townsend, Dean of Engineering
Alina Achim, Registrar
David Aldwinckle, Information Systems Technology
Andrew Dale, Institute for Quantum Computing
Marta Szepietowski, Institute for Quantum Computing
Gilbert Lesperance, Drama & Speech Communications
Michelle Burlock, Undergrad Recruitment
Carol Seely Morrison, Applied Mathematics
Janine Ouimet, Psychology
Hiruy Haile, Science Technical Services
Mark Kuntz, Engineering Machine Shop
Dan Jessel, School of Architecture
Michelle Manios, Psychology
Elaine Lillie, School of Pharmacy
Nadine Quehl, Psychology
Andrew Dube, Science Technical Services
Ellen Rethore, External Relations
Sylvie Beaulieu, Physics and Astronomy
Kirsty Budd, Federation of Students
Lisa David, Institute for Quantum Computing
Michelle Smith, Registrar
Ellen Murray, Registrar
Shermaine Primeau, Human Resources
Mingqian (John) Zhang, Chemical Engineering
Sam Laban, Dean of Arts Office

Allison Stewart, Human Resources
Lindsay Sprague, Recreation and Leisure Studies
Lisa Allen, School of Pharmacy
Lynsey Ellis-Smith, Dean of Engineering
Stephanie Johnson, Applied Health Sciences/ODAA
Paula Downey, Housing & Residences
Nicole Joron, Federation of Students
Susan King, Electrical & Computer Engineering
Karen Kawawada, Communications & Public Affairs
Brad Krane, Federation of Students

Promotions & Transfers

Rina Salazar, Civil & Environmental Engineering
Tatum Bizony, Registrar
Amy Fernandes, Associate Provost, Academic Affairs
Samantha Gibbon, Library
Mike Iley, Housing & Residences
Soraya Marinho, Registrar
Kelly Millar, School of Accounting & Finance
Jian Zou, Combinatorics & Optimization
Katja Czarnecki, Germanic & Slavic Studies
Shabnam Ivkovic, Centre for Career Action
Mary Jane Jennings, IAP
Emily Stafford, Architecture
Michelle Maree, Arts Undergraduate Office
Dawn Cheng, Kinesiology

Current UWSA Executive Committee:
President: Trevor Grove, Computer Science, Ext. 34679
Past-President: Doug Dye, Safety Office, Ext. 35613
Secretary: Jason Gorrie, IST, Ext. 37842
Treasurer: Sheila McConnell, Computer Science, Ext. 33203
Director: Jeremy Steffler, PDEng, Ext. 38082
Director: Annette Dietrich, ECE, Ext. 38231
Director: Darlene Ryan, Intl. Student Office, Ext. 32814
Director: Monika Bothwell, Dean of Science Office, Ext. 37830
UWSA Executive Manager: Gail Spencer, Ext. 38668
UWSA Office Manager: Darlene Garside, Ext. 33566

UWSA Membership cards for 2011
You will be receiving your 2011 membership cards via inter-office mail shortly. Cards will come with a two-sided document. The document is a refill for the small sheet in the UWSA brochure you received last year. One side lists the new UWSA Executive Committee for 2011 and on the other side is a letter from the UWSA President.