Introducing the 2014-2015 University Classified Staff Council

The University Classified Staff Council membership consists of: elected representatives from each operating unit; one member appointed by the President, one member appointed by the Affirmative Action Officer (currently shared by two individuals), and additional ex-officio members.

The UCSC 2014-2015 Officers are: Chair Beth Ardoin Watson, Chair-Elect Denée Swann, Secretary Trudy Barrett, Treasurer Lisa Byrd and Parliamentarian Alainna Talton.

Visit the UCSC website for more information.

UTHealth President Colasurdo hosts town halls across institution

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC) President Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, M.D., held several town hall meetings across the UTHSC campus over the past year. These town hall meetings were to discuss the future of UTHSC and address any suggestions or concerns from faculty, staff and students from all UTHSC schools.

The UCSC attended the town hall meeting held on October 23 at Beth Robertson Auditorium in the Fayez S. Sarofim Research Building. At this meeting, President Colasurdo discussed the explosive growth that UTHSC has undergone over the past five years. Then he opened the floor to receive comments from the attendees who raised concerns about patient electronic health record and genetic data access, the potential for a new building, and creating positions for informatics fellows in UTHSC partner hospitals. To the crowd's delight, President Colasurdo promised, on the spot, to create a fellow position.

Overall, the town hall meeting demonstrated that President Colasurdo will consider, as well as support, requests made by faculty, staff and students to improve the future of UTHSC.
Chair’s Message

It’s a new fiscal year, and there is already so much going on with the University Classified Staff Council. I am excited to welcome a lot of new faces to the council this year; this allows us to get new ideas to our group. I am also excited to welcome back so many returning members who bring experience and continuity to the team. The council is really a group of representatives. We act on your behalf to collectively address issues and make you aware of the things going on at UTHealth.

Over the summer, we had another great workshop for classified staff. Approximately 200 signed up to attend this annual event. This was our 19th workshop, and the theme was You’re a Gift. It focused on bringing attention to the strength of the individual person, their role in effectively running homes, offices, clinics and teams, as well as, working on relationships with other team members in all situations. We were delighted to have speakers from within the university, including administration, faculty, students and classified staff, plus one previous UCSC Educational Award winner. I, personally, was most impressed by the gifts of talent that were shared by the musicians and the speakers, along with the teamwork that was displayed by those that helped prepare, set up and organize the workshop. Each individual inspired as they used their personal strengths to create an excellent educational and “refreshing” day for everyone.

This year, we are hosting more Brown Bag “lunch and learn” sessions. I encourage you to grab your lunch and come over to hear the speakers, each sharing valuable information, as well as their unique perspective, on a variety of subjects. In order to make this information more readily available to you, we will be updating the look of our UCSC web page. Please plan on joining us for some of these fun interactive sessions.

So, all of that is about what we are doing. However, we are here to represent all of the classified staff, so we will be out and about to make contact with more of you to see what it is that you need from us. We want to hear what is working and what suggestions you have for our institution, our home away from home. As UCSC Chair, I visited each of the six schools and the two administrative buildings in December, holding 10 town hall meetings in all. I learned of some of the strengths of the university, as well as, some concerns from the classified staff. I will be addressing these in the near future and will post responses to some of the questions on the UCSC Web site. Of course, if you are interested in attending any of our monthly meetings, the dates will be posted on the website or you can email us.

I look forward to serving as your UCSC Chair and making this a great year at UTHealth.

Beth DeCuir Watson
UCSC Chair 2014-2015
Building Success through Skill Development  
**Presenter:** Anjanette Sullivan, Learning & Development Mgr., HR  

On October 20, the UCSC hosted a Brown Bag session at the UTHealth Medical School. The topic was, “Building Success through Skill Development.” The presenter was Anjanette Sullivan, the learning & development manager with Human Resources at UTHealth.

During the session, Sullivan offered different ways to determine what job might best suit you and what the next steps in your career might be. A crucial point she made was to prepare yourself by being informed about a job or career path you are interested in pursuing. She also recommended tools such as honest self-assessment, online free career assessment websites (mynextmove.org and Salary.com), finding a mentor, resources provided through UTHealth and researching the jobs you think you may be interested in obtaining.

UTHealth offers a range of resources to its employees. One resource mentioned was SkillSoft. It provides cloud-based learning, courses, books and videos on a variety of subjects. All are accessible at no charge to UTHealth employees. A link to SkillSoft can be found on the university’s intranet.

A link to Sullivan’s presentation is posted on the UCSC web site.

Hot Topics with Eric Fernette  
**Speaker:** Eric Fernette, VP & Chief HR Officer  

On November 19, the UCSC hosted its second Brown Bag session at the UTHealth Medical School. The topic was, “Hot Topics with Eric Fernette.”

The speaker, Eric Fernette, is the vice president & chief human resources officer for UTHealth. Fernette spoke on a variety of topics that will impact classified staff. Those topics covered the Strategic Plan for UTHealth 2015-2020, career architecture information, new career growth and development plan, updates to the HR website, and other HR news.

The career architecture mentioned provides administrative staff with a development pathway, skills and education requirements to advance from their current position. It will give the necessary information on where to obtain the training needed – whether internally, online or externally – in order to continue growing at the university. The Career Architecture Program for Employees will be implemented March 1 with an information website slated for this month (January 2015).

Human Resources has also rolled out Manager/Supervisor Development training. This curriculum is geared toward supervisors to foster an open, supportive environment. You can access it through the TRC.

Fernette also shared some interesting statistics about our UTHealth family. During the fiscal years 2011 and 2012, UTHealth added approximately 120 people per year; during the fiscal years 2013 and 2014, we added approximately 500 people per year to our institution. Also, the survey we all received had a 55% participation rate from employees. This is the fourth year for the survey.

All in all, the information provided by Fernette was informative, encouraging and interesting. UTHealth is growing, and we are all fortunate to be part of that process.

Conflict Resolution  
**Presenter:** Anjanette Sullivan  

The next Brown Bag hosted by UCSC will be held on January 26 at the School of Dentistry. The topic will be Conflict Resolution. Be sure to look for the flyers for further information or visit the UCSC website.
Merriment rang yonder through Grant/Fay Park as their majesties, King Effer Vescent and Queen Bubbles of Bath, greeted UTHealth employees as they gathered at the Renaissance-themed annual Fun Fest event held on Thursday, November 20, 2014.

Festival entertainment included jugglers, a harpist, walking trees, music and dancing (with the awarding of trophies for special efforts)! There were also competitions to cross the moat, tomato throwing, jousting as well as games of giant chess and Jenga.

Of course an abundance of food choices from turkey legs and pretzels to fried dough kept royal subjects happy. While the more health conscious could choose from roasted corn, potato on a stick and apple slices covered in chocolate syrup and whip cream. Yum!

University Classified Staff Council member Tricia Hill-Thomas (pictured at bottom, left) played a major role as she coordinated the volunteer staffing for the event.

All in all, a wonderful afternoon for those in attendance.
The UCSC Educational Committee awarded five scholarships to children of classified staff in 2014. Those five students were:

Rachel Hamby, our 1st place winner and daughter of Rhonda Hamby, was awarded $1,250. She will attend Blinn College in Bryan, Texas, and then transfer to A&M in the fall of 2015. Her major will be in Animal Science.

Laura Beth Adams, our 2nd place winner and daughter of John Hope Adams, III, was awarded $1,000. She will attend Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio. She will be enrolled in psychology as well as creative writing.

Marvin Thomas, Jr., our 3rd place winner and son of Tricia Hill-Thomas, was awarded $750.00. He will attend the University of Texas at Austin. He hopes to earn a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology and be accepted into the Dell Medical School.

Tate Smith, who tied for 4th place winner and son of Ketti Eipers-Smith, will attend Rice University to study economics and political science.

Alice Tran, who tied for 4th place winner and daughter of Lieu Tran, will attend the University of Houston and major in Natural Sciences and Mathematics Biology. She intends to attend dental school after college.

Both 4th place winners were awarded $500.

Congratulations to all of these outstanding students and their parents, as well as to those of you who donated to the Educational Fund in order to help these young men and women realize their dreams!
2014 UCSC WORKSHOP

The UCSC held its 19th Annual Classified Staff Workshop on July 18, 2014, at The Denton A. Cooley, M.D. and Ralph C. Cooley, D.D.S. University Life Center. The workshop theme was You’re a Gift and covered topics on personal and leadership development. Information about the 2015 workshop will be available on the UCSC website soon.

More photos from the 2014 workshop can be viewed at the UCSC workshop website.

Reminder to UCSC Representatives: Please send all publications and correspondence to the Communications Committee prior to publishing, mailing or emailing.