

## University Staff Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** October 10, 2006  
**Meet Time:** 8:30a.m. – 10:00a.m.  
**Meeting Location:** Room 189, Sarratt

**Attendees:** Becky Atack, Beth Clark, Mary Clissold, Cathy Crimi, Michael Crowe, Ashley Crownover, Tracy Cunningham, Michele Dixon, Kay Donigian, Jeffery Duly, Sandie Frantz, Sharone Hall, Nancy Hanna, Beth Hanson, Antoinette Hicks, Shirley Hiltz, Sammie Huffmon, Tiffany Ingram, Rosalind Johnson, Sue King, Bonnie Kress, Ginger Leger, Willa Dean Martin, Ian McCullough, Jackie McMath, Shelley Meadows, Donald Pickert, Martha Reid, Sheri Reynolds, Kathy Rhodes, Robert Rich, Karen Seezen, Lori Shepard, Chase Smith, Lynn Smith, Brian Smokler, Sharon Stanley, Susan Starcher, Dan Steward, Davis Strange, Malah Tidwell, Gay Tidwell, Kay Tyler, Mary Clark Webb, Jim Webb, Cliff Wilson, Melissa Woche, Diana Wohlfahrt

**Regrets:** Brad Awalt, Diane Banks, John Brassil, Ken Carter, Dan Cline Kevin Colon, Kathleen Corbitt, Sue Davis, Mary Ann Dean, Faye Dorman, Mary Lou Edgar, Kenon Ewing, Carol Guth, Pam Hoffner, Jason Hunt, Faye Johnson, Heather Lefkowitz, Joe Lowe, Joyce Matthews, Mary Kay Matthys, Brenda McKee, Ginny McLean-Swartzell, Laurie McPeak, Regina Newsom-Snell, Stephanie Newton, JoAnn Patterson, Andy Richter, Mike Smeltzer, Carol Soren, Corwin Thomas, Carlos Trenary, Susan Widmer, Sherry Willis, Jeff Youngblood.

**Visitors:** Jane Bruce

- **President Diana Wohlfahrt called meeting to order**
- **September meeting minutes approved**
- **Benefits Fair**

**Speaker: Jane Bruce**

Jane announced that the benefits fair was kicking off at 10am in the RRB Breezeway. She also gave the hours of the benefits fair. They were to be 10a-7p on Tuesday (10/10) and 7a-4p on Wednesday (10/11) at the RRB Breezeway location. Jane also announced that door prizes would be given away. At the top of every hour, attendees would be able to attend a presentation on the healthcare options, and at the bottom of every hour, a presentation on the Aetna Choice plan would be available. Jane reminded the group that everyone must turn in a form this year or they will get employee only Aetna Standard coverage. If you did not receive a benefits packet, Jane asked that you contact the Benefits office.

**Question: Has the deadline for returning open enrollment form always been mid-month?** Jane said that for the last 10 years or so it has been mid-month, but it has not always been mid-month.

- **Project Safe**

**Speaker: Vicky Basra- Director, Project Safe and Kacy Silverstein**

**To view presentation: [\(Project Safe Powerpoint Presentation\)](#) - To come**

Vicky Basra began by discussing the three main objectives of the Project Safe presentation. The objectives are to provide a clearer understanding of violence against women; provide a better knowledge of victim's resources and to provide a better understanding of Project Safe. Project Safe was originally funded by a Department of Justice Grant to create a violence against women task force. In 2004, the program lost its grant. The University recognized the importance of Project Safe and continued funding the program. The goal of Project Safe is to prevent violence against women.

The following domestic violence statistics were presented to the council. While women are less likely than men to be victims of violent crimes overall, women are 5 to 8 times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner. (Department of Justice, 1998). More than 50% of women will experience some type of violence from an intimate partner. (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1992). Between 25% & 33% of relationships between LGBT partners include abuse, a rate equal to that of heterosexual relationships (PRIDE Foundation). A woman is physically abused by her husband every 9 seconds in the United States. Approximately 3.3 million children witness violence towards their mothers.

**Question: Does everyone know what LGBT means?** The entire council did not know what LGBT meant. Kacy answered the question stating that LGBT was lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender.

After discussing domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking were addressed. The following sexual assault statistics were given. In 3 out of 4 incidents of sexual assault and rape, the offender was not a stranger. Estimated 91% of rape victims are female and 99% of offenders are male. Approximately 302,100 women are raped each year in the United States. 1 in 10 males commit sexual crimes against women. One in nine women in Tennessee have been the victim of forcible rape sometime in their lifetime, and one in four women have been sexually assaulted at least once in their life. These statistics were from National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center, 2003.

Stalking was defined as a "course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear bodily injury". Unlike other crimes, stalking is a series of actions that, when taken individually, may be perfectly legal. An example of being sent flowers every day when you have requested that the sender stop sending them.

**Question: How would being sent flowers everyday make you fear bodily harm?** Stalking is subjective, but the harm could be feared based on the notes being sent with the flowers or based on past experience with the sender. Stalking often occurs in conjunction with assault.

The following stalking statistics were given. 81% of women who were stalked by a current or former husband or cohabiting partner were also physically assaulted and 31% were also sexually assaulted by that partner. 1 out of every 12 women will be stalked during her lifetime and 1 out of 45 men will be stalked during his lifetime. 77% of female victims were stalked by someone they knew and 59% of female victims were stalked by an intimate partner. 94% of stalkers identified by female victims were men. These statistics were adapted from the National Center for Victims of Crime.

Project Safe focuses on education and outreach in the Vanderbilt and Nashville Community. They do undergraduate orientation, but do not do an overall presentation for graduate students. Project Safe has some involvement with specific graduate orientations, at the request of a given program. Project Safe also focuses on advocacy. They have a 24hr/7day per week crisis line at 936-7273. This line is confidential for faculty, staff and students. They work with community resources and offer support groups (currently there are only active groups available for students, but Project Safe would offer for faculty/staff if there was an interest from those groups). Project Safe is a confidential resource. The only other campus resources that are confidential are psych and counseling and EAP. Both Vicky and Kacy are certified social workers/counselors.

**Question: What were the VU crime statistics reported last year?** 53 reports from faculty, staff and students.

**Question: How involved is VUPD?** Very involved. They are one of the biggest allies of the task force.

**Question: If a man is abused by his wife, can he call you?** Yes. Project Safe focuses on women because of the statistics, but they are available for men also.

**Question: Do you do department presentations?** Yes, they are available to give training for anyone on campus.

**Question: Do you call victims if you are given information?** No. Project Safe does not contact victims that don't call them. Kacy said that is important to remember that a victim knows their abuser best. The woman will know what his triggers are. This question moved the presentation into "Things to Remember".

Things to Remember: **Respect Confidentiality:** If possible allow her to decide who she wants to tell and how she would like to share her experience. This is essential in building trust and ensuring her safety. **Respect her Autonomy:** Respect her right to make decisions in her own life, when she is ready. She is the expert on her life. **Acknowledge the Injustice:** The violence perpetrated against her is not her fault. No one deserves to be abused. Remind her of this as much as possible. **Believe and Validate her Experiences:** Listen to her and believe her. Acknowledge her feelings and experience. The experience of violence impacts each woman differently. **Avoid Victim Blaming:** Be aware of how language focused on the victim can result in the victim blaming herself for the assault. Never say "it's not your fault but..."

Project Safe also Reminds us to call on them: to advocate for victims on campus and in the community; to provide crisis intervention 24 hrs. a day/ 7 days a week; to provide hospital accompaniment; to connect victims with other campus and community resources (.ex. Support groups, individual counseling, etc.); to provide third-party support (parents, friends, professors, etc.); to support YOU in your own self-care, as you work with victims.

Project Safe is involved with the following events: Clothesline Project on October 18, 2006; These Hands Don't Hurt on October 23, 2006; Take Back the Night on October 23, 2006; Beyond Beats and Rhyme (Byron Hurt) on October 24, 2006; Hand in Hand on November 2-4, 2006; Stalking Awareness Month in January 2007; Vagina Monologues on February 13 & 14 and Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April 2007.

- **Healthy Kids 2025 Initiative**

**Speaker: Susan Kohari- Manager, Pediatric Services**

**To view presentation: [\(Healthy Kids 2025 Powerpoint Presentation\)](#)**

Healthy Kids 2025 was started because Tennessee ranked 34 in the nation for children's health. The name Healthy Kids 2025 was selected because that is the year that many of our children will be entering the workforce. This year, Tennessee has fallen to 46 in child healthcare and wellbeing. The initiative first collected surveys to establish a baseline. They also focus on education and awareness and initiatives. Participation from state companies has increased this year.

The Healthy Kids survey runs from September to December 31. The survey was updated this year, so it is important that you complete it again even if you participated last year. Vanderbilt has close to 7000 employees with children under 18 and about 17% of the VU community had completed the survey to date. Susan points out that completing the survey is on the action wellness plan for go for the gold.

**Question: How do you get the number of VU employees with children under 18?**  
Estimate based on benefits.

A drawing will be held in January for all those who have completed the survey.

**Question: Is there one thing driving our low state statistic? Do the statistics show that?** Can't give an answer to that question. There is no one factor. They take safety, infant mortality rates, etc into consideration. The key is education to parents.

Comment was made that Tennessee is also ranked on the low end in education. We are also looking at the state as a whole in the statistics, not just Davidson County. Metro/Davidson may be on the high end of rankings, but as a state we have lots of rural counties that don't have the access to the same healthcare that we do.

More information about Healthy Kids 2025 can be found at [www.healthykids2025.com](http://www.healthykids2025.com). The site has a link to this year's survey, a calendar of events and the results of last year's survey.

The next USAC meeting will be on November 14, 2006 in the Rand Function room in Sarratt. Martha Ingram, Chair of the Board of Trust will be speaking.