

USAC Board of Trust Address

Lara Beth Lehman University Library USAC President 2013-2014

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Members of the Board of Trust, Vanderbilt Leaders, and distinguished guests, I am honored to have the opportunity to address you today on behalf of the University Staff Advisory Council.

As perhaps you know, the Staff Advisory Council represents all employees outside of the medical center who are in non-faculty, non-union positions. We are made up of more than 90 individuals, chosen by 23 campus groups. Our members include hourly employees to professionals, administrators, and technical specialists. More than 3,000 staff are represented.

Our mission as a council is to act as an advisory group to administration and staff on university policies and topics related to staff life, establish and maintain communication between staff and the administration at all levels, and serve and support the Vanderbilt Community.

The primary motivation of the council is to strengthen the experience of staff at Vanderbilt and our activities all aim to support this charge. We do this by serving as a sounding board for staff, supporting communication efforts between staff and administration, and by creating opportunities for staff to engage in service to the greater Vanderbilt community.

I would like to share with you a few highlights from this council year.

We take great pride in our service to the Vanderbilt community. We have hosted three Red Cross Blood drives which have resulted 117 pints of blood being donated by over 100 donors. During the month of February, we co-sponsored a "Share the Love" Food Drive with our partners on the Medical Center Staff Advisory Council. Vanderbilt staff donated a total of 2,845 pounds of food to Second Harvest which translates to approximately 2,000 meals. Our events team organized a service day at Second Harvest and we had 25 VU staff members volunteer to sort food. Our most important service activities surround raising money for the Employee Hardship Fund. One way in which we accomplish this goal is through our Kroger card program – staff purchase cards from us, load them with money to buy gas or groceries, and 4% of purchases made with these cards goes to the Employee Hardship Fund. We have sold over 100 Kroger cards this council year- 72 of those at the Employee Celebration Turkey Toss event alone. We have generated \$1600 for the Employee Hardship Fund this year. Staff Council is and always will be actively engaged in staff welfare.

In an effort to align ourselves with the "One University" motto- we have forged new collaborative relationships with several campus partners. In addition to the Turkey Toss, we have participated in Employee Celebration events like the Employee Tailgate. At that event, we handed out over 1,000 fan tattoos to VU employees and their families.

Just recently, the fruits of our collaborative efforts culminated in an event hosted by our new CARE committee. CARE stands for Civility, Appreciation, and Respectful Environments and is a true example of

the “One University” spirit. This committee consists of members from both Staff Advisory Councils, Faculty Senate, and staff from Human Resources. Staff and faculty from across the university and medical center convened March 25 for a discussion about civility in the workplace for a kick-off event. Presenters included Provost Richard McCarty, Margie Gale from Employee Assistance, Jeff Palmucci, the director of Radiology in the Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital, and Tammy Key from the Human Resources Organizational Effectiveness Team. Provost McCarty challenged the group to be our best selves, to have courage, and to think of ourselves at Vanderbilt as an extended family. Tammy Key offered strategies for managing stress and encouraged staff and faculty to be proactive in promoting civility in the workplace.

In an effort to increase awareness of the many functions of the university; we invite campus leaders to speak at our monthly meetings. Chief Human Resources Officer Traci Nordberg briefed us on staff survey results, our new Vice Chancellor of Information Technology, John Lutz, recently spoke with us about a new partnership with Dell, and we recently heard a state of the university address from Chancellor Zeppos. In addition, Dr. Susan Wente and Dr. John Geer presented on the academic strategic planning initiative. This fall, we began recording our guest speakers and archiving the videos on our website. We have received a lot of positive feedback from staff. A benefit of being a part of the council is hearing directly from Vanderbilt administrators on new initiatives and policies. By making the recordings available, all staff can now have that advantage.

The University Staff Advisory council supports the mission and vision of the university by serving as ambassadors to staff and administration. The culture of scholarship and community unite us in Vanderbilt’s mission keeping scholarly research, creative teaching, and service to the community and society at our center.

Thank you for the honor of addressing you today on behalf of the University Staff Advisory Council and thank you for your stewardship of Vanderbilt University.