

Presentation to the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust
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When I was in graduate school, I wrote a paper comparing Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to a novel that discusses an ascent of Mt. Everest – an ascent that took the lives of twelve of the climbers. The revealing thing about this paper is that while physiological and safety needs are predominant, and usually satisfied first according to Maslow's theory, the need for self-actualization was the most domineering for the select group of men and women who ascended Mt. Everest in May 1996. They set aside their own safety and wealth to fulfill what seemed unattainable goals.

Maslow brings forth the Hierarchy of Needs Model and introduces the need for Self-Actualization. He defines this need as a desire to maximize one's potential and notes that it includes two motives – competence and achievement.

During my Presidency of the University Staff Advisory Council, I recognized these same attributes in staff members all across the campus, and while I do not need to fully understand Maslow's behavior theories to appreciate these qualities, it is interesting to me that such a comparison can be made.

Competence is evident when a person strives for control instead of waiting passively for their goals or objectives to be reached. The motive reveals itself as a desire for job mastery and professional growth. A desire we all share and a desire I have seen when working with my constituents.

Achievement is best distinguished by the need for personal accomplishments rather than the rewards of success and the need

surfaces only when people believe they can influence the outcome. For example, recommendations of the Staff Advisory Council would not be effective unless some tangible results are realized. At the very least, recognition of the Council's concerns by the administration.

Keeping the attributes of competence and achievement in mind, let's take the next couple of minutes to reflect on staff accomplishments and to appreciate the dedication of this unique set of employees. I would like to then close with a few remarks of appreciation for the support and recognition the Council receives from the Chancellor and the Administration.

As we all know and appreciate, University staff play a critical role in furthering the objectives and priorities of the University. Five examples come to mind.

- To ensure that the residential college initiative meets expectations, extensive research has been conducted by staff and financial models developed to better define operational and fiscal parameters.
- Staff efforts toward the transition from "etob" to "etob lite" as some call it resulted in the creation of the academic venture capital fund so departments can work together on transcending institutional initiatives.
- Recognition of Vanderbilt's contributions to the community is greatly enhanced from staff efforts to acquire volunteers for community projects such as Vanderbilt's Student Volunteers for Science.
- A staff task force established by Chancellor Gee to Simply the Operating Process or "STOP" created a web-based forms locator, simplified the hiring process through on-line collection of hiring information, and created a tuition based listserv to facilitate the administration of tuition benefits.

- Lastly, and perhaps one of the most striking indicators of staff commitment, is the \$290,000 donated by University staff to the Community Giving Campaign.

Going forward into the next year, I would like to see the Council and the administration build upon the existing partnership that has evolved. To do this, the Council should continue to embrace the Chancellor's values and work with the administration to make our joint vision a reality. During the last year, improved tuition benefits were announced, and employees participated in the University Staff Satisfaction Survey – a survey that has the potential to spawn yet additional programs that benefit staff and enhance the University's commitment to a professional and caring working environment. Moreover, the administration continues to work with the Council to resolve issues in what seems to be a never-ending parking dilemma.

I appreciate the administration's willingness to involve the Council both in the resolution of tough issues, such as parking and short term medical benefits, but also in the celebration of like accomplishments such as increased funding for educational opportunities. Perhaps it's not too much of a stretch after all to draw some remote comparison between the Hierarchy of Needs and the interest of the Staff Advisory Council and the Administration in the recognition of competence, and the celebration of achievements at Vanderbilt

Thank you for receiving my remarks and I look forward to working with the Administration and the Board of Trust in any capacity to advance the programs of this institution.