



## The Staff Council

# Chronicle

News and more for the Smith College community

March 2005

## 2004 - 2005 Staff Council Members



**Merrilyn Lewis**, Advancement Officer  
**Sandy Bycenski**, Technology Support Consultant, ITS  
**Nancy Brady**, Librarian, Campus School  
**Marti Hobbes**, News Assistant, College Relations  
**Joe Bialek**, Preparations Spvr., Neilson Library  
**Patty Kimura**, Human Resources Manager  
**Karen LeHouiller**, Technology Support Consultant, ITS

**Karen Hebert**, Admin. Asst., Physical Plant  
**Terrilyn Calloway**, Admin. Asst., Afro-American Studies  
**Stacey Anasazi** (co-Editor, Staff Council Chronicle), Budget and Accounting Coordinator, Museum of Art  
**Linda LaFlam**, Spvr. of Residential Operations, Physical Plant  
**Janice Cole**, Investment Accountant, Controller's Office  
**Chris Carr Hill**, Planned Giving Coordinator, Advancement



**Mike Washut**, Microcomputer Sales Asst., ITS  
**Sam Rush**, Production Coordinator, Theatre  
**Linda Rainville**, Administrative Assistant, Athletics  
**Sue Beamier**, Academic Secretary, Clark Science Center  
**Adrienne Andrews**, Ombudsperson  
**Laura Matta**, Admin Asst, College Admissions  
**Kate Kilpatrick**, Human Resources Specialist



Away on picture day: **Kim Allen**, Assoc. Dir., Athletics; **Adrian Beaulieu**, Assoc. Dean, Int'l Studies; **Gayle Fitzgerald**, Custodian, Physical Plant; **Jinny Mason**, Admin. Asst., Center for Study of Social & Political Change; **Steve Monteiro**, President's Custodian, Physical Plant; **Patricia Rist**, Admin. Asst., Dance; **Bill Sheehan**, Chief Accountant, Controller's Office; **Xinh Spangler**, Business Operations Asst., Physical Plant; **Tara Zidonik**, Circulation Supervisor, Neilson Library



## From the Chair

As I write this column, it's too early to tell if March will come in like a lion or a lamb. I have heard this time of year referred to as "t'aint season" – t'aint winter and t'aint spring. Some call it "mud season" – a term of endearment, I'm sure.

March is also the time of year when staff have the opportunity to become more involved in our Smith community. No, not just the extra efforts we all expend preparing for commencement and reunions, but the time when you can nominate another staff person (or yourself) to serve on Staff Council or a committee. Each year half of the Council (12-13 members) is up for re-election or completes a term (we have term limits). It is vital that others step forward to represent all the different views and concerns of our community. We depend on each other. Yes, it does take time – which the college grants as release time – and it is enormously gratifying to feel that you have made a difference in our community.

At the end of May, I am completing my fourth year as a representative and my second as chair. This has been an invaluable experience for me. Not only have I learned more about the operation of the college, but I have gained greater appreciation for the many (and often unseen) contributions staff make towards the living success of the college. I have also had the pleasure to meet and the privilege to work with fellow staff members whom I would not have otherwise met.

In an effort to fully appreciate all that we have accomplished, I created an unofficial list of highlights from 2003-04 and 2004-05 for the Council members and I'm happy to share them with you at <http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil/accomplishments.html>. You, too, could be part of changes and efforts such as these.

I want to encourage your participation in whatever way appeals to you, and I want to thank you. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to serve as the chair of Staff Council.

Wishing you a wonderful spring,  
Merrilyn Lewis, Chair

## Staff Council Reps Speak Up



Question: Why serve on Staff Council?

*"Working with Staff Council reminds me of how broad and diverse Smith College is. Not only are the employees themselves a wonderfully eclectic mix and well worth getting to know, but the mission of the College requires a host of services and opportunities well beyond academics that enrich and employ many people. Without my contact with Staff Council, many parts of the campus and its staff would remain invisible to me."* **Nancy Brady**, Librarian, Campus School

*"I really enjoy being part of Staff Council because it allows me to connect with folks from all over campus which helps strengthen my sense of community. I am really proud of the support that Staff Council gave and received this past year when the College was going through many changes."* **Laura Matta**, Administrative Assistant, College Admissions

*"Being part of Staff Council has allowed me to meet many nice people from other departments on campus. Being part of the Activities Committee I have been fortunate enough to work with a great group of very creative people and through our efforts we have organized some fun events for staff."* **Linda LaFlam**, Supervisor of Residential Operations, Physical Plant

*"There are three main reasons I like to be on Staff Council. I really like to meet people from other departments. I get a much fuller picture of the college when I listen to other peoples' triumphs and tribulations. I get to know what is going on that is of import to the staff..."* **Jinny Mason**, Administrative Assistant, Center for the Study of Social & Political Change

*"I have enjoyed the community spirit that is part of being on Staff Council."* **Sandy Bycenski**, Technical Support Consultant, User Support Center

*"...I'm always amazed to see how much time, effort and discussion go into all of the committees and events that go on campus wide...it is a great learning experience and wonderful that we do have a voice and are being heard."* **Sue Beaumier**, Academic Secretary, Clark Science Center

*"Joining Staff Council allows you to properly communicate with all staff regarding staff issues."* **Karen Hebert**, Administrative Assistant, Physical Plant

*"As my four years on Staff Council come to an end, I know I will miss regularly meeting with colleagues from across campus who are all committed to discussing ways to improve whatever the issues on campus may be at the time. We all bring different experiences and opinions to the table and I find that helpful in trying to see all sides of a dilemma...Staff Council has provided me with many opportunities to laugh over the years and I will miss the camaraderie that this unique group provides."* **Chris Carr Hill**, Planned Giving Coordinator, Advancement



# Staff Council

## SECOND CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

For those interested in serving in an appointed, not an elected position, we are in need of staff willing to serve on College and Staff Council committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, etc.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of interest, committee, etc. (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

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### Staff Council nominees have served on the following college committees:

- ◆Common Ground Campus Committee ◆Trustee Committee on Investor Responsibility
- ◆Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA) ◆Committee on Missions and Priorities
- ◆Aids Education Committee ◆Otelia Cromwell Day Committee ◆Civil Rights Board
- ◆College Council on Community Policy ◆Employee Excellence Selection Committee
- ◆Fitness Center Programming Committee ◆Presidential Search Committee

## SECOND CALL for NOMINATIONS

Staff Council is primarily the vehicle for having a represented voice in community issues at Smith College. The mission of Staff Council is to give members of the administrative, administrative support and service staff a focused and direct involvement in the governance of non-academic affairs and in the life of the Smith College community. Participating in change is empowering. Constructive change and communication is what Staff Council is all about.

We currently have an elected membership of 25, with officers and six standing committees: Steering, Communications, Activities, Nominations & Elections, Diversity and Personnel Policy. **The monthly time commitment can be as little as two hours per month. The release time policy in the staff handbook states that up to 30 hours of release time will be granted each fiscal year to Council members for attendance at Council and committee meetings.**

Each year Staff Council elects approximately one-half of its 25 members for two-year terms. Elections will be held in April. Term of office is June 1, 2005, to May 31, 2007. **Newly elected members will be invited to the May 2005 Staff Council meeting.** Please consider running or asking a co-worker to run.

### Nomination(s) for two-year term on Staff Council:

Name & Campus Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please be sure the person is willing to serve if elected.)

**Return by March 25, 2005 to be on the ballot.**

- Please return by Campus Mail addressed to: Staff Council
- Or submit a nomination by e-mail to Chris Carr Hill at [cchill@smith.edu](mailto:cchill@smith.edu)

# Staff Council...What Is It?

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Smith College Staff Council is to give members of the administrative, administrative support and service staff a focused and direct involvement in the governance of non-academic affairs and in the life of the Smith College community.

The Staff Council will ensure participation of staff in the policy-making process, promote visibility of staff as valuable members of the Smith community, and facilitate a sense of belonging within the community. The Council will examine policies affecting the employment environment and the community and make recommendations to the appropriate committees and administrators. The Council will actively seek to involve all segments of the College's diverse staff in the College's decision-making process.

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## How We Began

In 1991, the staff elected delegates to the Staff Council Convention. The charge of the convention was to draft a Staff Council charter acceptable to staff and the president. Many meetings and drafts later, the Smith College Staff Council was born.

The first elections were held in May 1992. To ensure that the goals of the Staff Council were achieved, the organizational framework in the charter was intentionally broad. The Council began with 30 elected representatives and two members appointed by then President Mary Maples Dunn.

Officers and six standing committees (Steering, Communications, Finance and Budget, Nominations and Elections, Personnel Policy and Staff Development) formed the framework of the Council at that time. The committees were the primary vehicle for dealing with community issues, and were composed of elected, appointed, and at-large members.

## Staff Council Today

Staff Council continues to have six standing committees, though committees have changed. Members are drawn from both the membership of Staff Council and other staff members, while representing the three major staff groups (Administrative, Administrative Support and Service). Chairpersons of each committee report regularly to Staff Council on the committee's work and progress. Occasionally, **Ad Hoc** committees are created if the need arises.

The **Steering Committee** ensures that issues are brought to and discussed with administrators and committees and information is gathered from the various segments of the College community for discussion at Staff Council meetings.

The **Nominations and Elections Committee** ensures that all elections are conducted properly and provide nominations for appointment to campus committees.

The **Communications Committee** keeps staff informed of the actions of Staff Council and other issues of interest to staff via the Council Chronicle newsletter and other means. This committee also advises administration regarding the dissemination of other information to staff and the community at large.

The **Personnel Policy Committee** examines, reviews and comments on College personnel policies and promotes improved staff training and development.

The **Activities Committee** participates in the coordinating, organizing and publicizing of special events, which allow staff to meet and interact with colleagues in other departments across campus.

The **Diversity Committee** maintains an awareness of and sensitivity to creating an inclusive community as well as identifying and planning activities that reflect Staff Council's commitment to diversity.

Staff Council is not a labor organization, and is not authorized to negotiate grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment or conditions of work.

## *What Staff Council Does for You*

Staff Council has many accomplishments for which staff members can take pride. The following highlights are from the most recent two years. A complete listing is available on the Web: <http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil/accomplishments.html>

Established staff representation:

- On several college-wide policymaking committees such as Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA), College Council on Community Policy (CCCP), Common Ground Advisory Committee, Committee on Mission and Priorities (CMP), Campus Center Advisory Board and Committee on Sustainability;
- On hiring committees for some senior administrative positions including Director of Institutional Diversity;
- At opening convocation.

Improves communication by:

- Publishing the Staff Council Chronicle with hardcopy circulation to staff as well as on the Web;
- Focusing efforts to improve communications to all areas, and especially Dining Services and Physical Plant;
- Maintaining the Staff Council Web site with meeting minutes, upcoming events, Council contacts, etc. [www.smith.edu/staffcouncil](http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil)
- Hosting the New Employee Van Tour;
- Holding open monthly meetings with guests or presenters, including Carol Christ, Lianne Sullivan-Crowley, Naomi Miller, Basil Stewart and the Brown University Staff Advisory Committee.

Promotes the well-being of the staff with:

- Creating a summary of employee benefits/perks;
- Designing New Employee Orientation Checklist to assist managers/supervisors;
- Successfully proposing to extend internal status to employees affected by the 2004 layoffs;
- Actively representing staff concerns in discussions on Center for Early Childhood Education and participating in the previous multi-year childcare study;
- Generating and presenting Staff Morale report to the president and Smith Administrative Management Seminar (SAMS), initiating discussion for developing strategies to improve staff morale.

Organizes and/or Sponsors:

Denim Day ▼ Wreath-making Workshop ▼ Outdoor and Saturday Matinees ▼ Wine-Tasting Class ▼ Craft Workshops ▼ Smith's Northampton 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Parade Float □Luna Film Festival ▼ Book/Movie Swap ▼ Garden Tours ▼ Christmas: Adopt a Family ▼ Food Bank Drive ▼ Bus Trips ▼ Make-Your-Own-Sundae on Mountain Day ▼ Cinco de Mayo 2003 ▼ Lunch and Learn Series ▼ Community Forums ▼ Staff Visions ▼ Staged the first Cultural Heritage Exhibit ▼ Gender Talk Lecture ▼ Indigenous Smith Students Association Celebration ▼ Tsunami Disaster Response ▼ Pot lucks

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The strength of Staff Council is demonstrated in its ability to respond to organizational changes, needs and shifts.

- In 1994, an ad hoc Activities Committee was formed to decrease isolation and enhance climate through social and community activity.
- The May 1995 Staff Council reorganized the representational component to reflect new trends in employee interest while maintaining proper proportionate representation.
- In 1996, to promote continuity, the original charter by-laws were amended to permit the election of representatives for staggered two-year terms.
- In 1998, the Charter was again revised to change elected membership to 25 and to add Activities as a standing committee while removing Staff Development and Finance & Budget.
- And, in 2005, recognizing the influential role it plays in promoting a sense of community at Smith, Staff Council recommended adding Diversity as a new standing committee.

## Upcoming Events

### Through April 8      13<sup>th</sup> Staff Visions Art Exhibit      Book Arts Gallery, Neilson Library, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Over 60 works from more than 30 of your peers are on display. Media include photography; paintings in oil, watercolor, pastel and egg tempera; pencil and ink drawings; porcelain dolls; fabric; collage; turned wood; metal sculpture and multi media. *Staff Visions Writers* includes poetry and short stories from staff writers.

Gallery hours (approximate): Monday - Friday, 8 am-11 pm; Saturday-Sunday, 10 am-11 pm; except during Spring recess, March 11- March 20. For detailed hours see: <http://www.smith.edu/libraries/info/hours/> and <http://www.smith.edu/libraries/info/hours/spring.htm>



Related Events:

**Tuesday, March 15, 12pm-1pm**  
**Wednesday, March 23, 12pm-1pm**  
**Friday, April 1, 12pm-1pm**

**Gallery talks by staff artists**  
**Gallery talks by staff artists**  
**Gallery reading by staff writers**

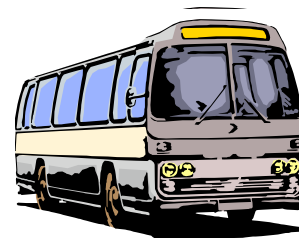
All Staff Visions events are sponsored by Smith College Staff Council and take place in the Book Arts Gallery, Neilson Library, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. Brown bag lunches are welcome.

### Monday, March 21, 10am-3pm      Book / Movie / Music Swap      Browsing Room, Neilson Library

Drop-off your swappable items at Neilson Library during the week of March 14-18 from 12pm-2pm. Then come back on Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup> and redeem your points on new-to-you books, movies and music!

### Sunday, April 3      Foxwoods Bus Trip

Try your luck at Foxwoods Casino or visit the Mashantucket Pequot Museum.  
Cost: \$20 per person. Sign up by email: [staffactivities@smith.edu](mailto:staffactivities@smith.edu)  
Or call Ext. 2678



### Saturday May 7      New York City Bus Trip

Take a bite out of the Big Apple! See the sights. Shop. Visit a museum or two.  
Cost: \$26 per person. Sign up by email: [staffactivities@smith.edu](mailto:staffactivities@smith.edu)  
Or call Ext. 2678

For more info on the above events, visit: <http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil/events.php>

The Staff Council Chronicle is funded by the Smith College Staff Council and is published several times a year by and for Smith College staff. It is distributed to staff and posted on the web at: [www.smith.edu/staffcouncil](http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil).

Staff are encouraged to offer story ideas and/or writing services. Letters-to-the-editor are encouraged. Please include your name and campus address. The Staff Council Chronicle reserves the right to edit material for clarity and length. Forward submissions to the editors:

Stacey Anasazi, Museum of Art, Ext. 2654  
[sanasazi@smith.edu](mailto:sanasazi@smith.edu)

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What issues do you think  
**Staff Council**  
should be exploring  
in the year ahead?

Send your comments to:  
[mlewis@smith.edu](mailto:mlewis@smith.edu)  
or  
Merrilyn Lewis  
Alumnae House  
Ext. 2630

Staff Council is a rewarding and productive group that is changing the employment environment for all staff at Smith College. Please consider getting involved! Visit our website at [www.smith.edu/staffcouncil](http://www.smith.edu/staffcouncil)