

A Letter from the Staff Council Chair by Thomas Lawson Lark

Another academic year is almost over. I'm sure that comes as no surprise because you are preparing for the end of classes, commencement, reunions, summer programs, admitted student tours, etc. In these busy times, I hope you get a chance to take a moment to pause and appreciate all that you have accomplished this year.

One of the biggest accomplishments of this year has been the launch of Workday. This has been a huge undertaking for many, many staff members across campus. Thank you to everyone who continues to work so hard on getting this system in place and training everyone on how to use it. The new library may be the biggest physical change on campus, but the transition to Workday is going to be a major transformation that will have a positive influence on every single person at Smith.

Along with those physical and technological changes on campus, we want to be making cultural changes as well. A big part of that takes place today. I want to strongly encourage everyone to actively participate in the day of learning, 'Inclusion in Action' today. Members of Staff Council have been working alongside others on the planning for this important event.

After the incident last July, the character of Smith College staff members was questioned by news outlets and many on social media. Now we have an opportunity to take positive action toward building trust in our community. Today, take some time to learn from someone new and appreciate a different perspective. You know what it's like to be you, but how much do you know about the experiences of someone who is a different race, gender, or sexual orientation? Attend as many sessions as you can, talk to people, ask questions, and try to make a connection outside of your day-to-day peer group. We can show each other that we truly care about every member of our community.

We have a strong culture at Smith, but we should strive to make it even stronger by becoming more inclusive. We want everyone to feel welcome and included here. If we can accomplish that, then we will all be able to do our very best work each day, and take pride in all that we do.



Staff Council, February 2019.

Staff Council 2018-19

- Kate Aloisio**, Assistant Director of Institutional Research
- Jennifer Blackburn**, Administrative Assistant, Poetry & French Studies
- Karla Borecky**, Systems Administrator, ITS
- Brian Bocchino**, Staff Accountant, Controller's Office
- Jon Cartledge**, Digital Asset Specialist, Imaging Center, Art Dept.
- Jessica Drawe**, Administrative Assistant, Admissions
- Christina Duquette**, Reservation Coord., Office of Student Engagement
- Jessica Flynn**, Payroll Manager, Controller's Office
- Donna Gingras**, Athletics Business Coordinator
- Maya Gounard**, Advancement Data Assistant, Development
- Eric Jensen**, Director, Center for Design & Fabrication, Clark Science
- Thomas Lark**, Financial Systems Coordinator, Dining Services
- Amanda Lopez**, Dining Room Coordinator, Dining Services
- Ann Mayo**, Manager Security and Guest Services, Museum of Art
- Lindsay McGrath**, Program Specialist, Alumnae Relations
- Heather McQueen**, Resource Manager, Clark Science Center
- Maddy Neely**, Administrative Coordinator, School for Social Work
- Chris Niemiec**, Tech Systems Analyst, Information Technology Service
- Davis Rivera**, Electrician, Facilities Management
- Barbara Solow**, Assistant Director for News, College Relations
- Erin Smith**, Stockroom Service Specialist, Clark Science Center
- Rashad Uqdah**, Catering Cook, Dining Services
- Johanna Walter**, Facilities Services Rep, Facilities Management
- Lucinda Williams**, Acquisitions Supervisor, Libraries
- Vanessa Williams**, Administrative Assistant, Dining Services



Class of 1896 Jumps into Spring!

(l to r) Alice Blair, Emily Betts, Florence Smith, Clara Bates, Edith Wheeler, and Caroline Ormsbee, who is representing the class of 1895

March under the Smith College Banner in the 2019 Pride Parade!

By Kate Alosio, Facilities Services Representative

Smith College Staff Council Diversity Committee, in collaboration with Smith's Resource Center for Sexuality and Gender, invites you to join us in the Northampton Pride 2019 parade on May 4th!

Last year, over 50 staff, students, and faculty were greeted with excitement and enthusiasm from the surrounding crowd as Smith College joined the parade for the first time. This year, with continued sponsorship from Staff Council and a second generous grant from President Kathleen McCartney, we are hoping for an even bigger Smith presence at Pride.

Once again, all participants will receive a free t-shirt and RCGS will host an all campus t-shirt tie-dye event. Be on the lookout for more details to follow. Also, new this year, marchers will be joined by a decorated Smith College van.

Please consider joining us as we help Northampton

SMITH COLLEGE



PRIDE 2019

celebrate LGBTQ+ Pride. You can use the following link to be added to the mailing list for more information or email staffcouncil@smith.edu. We look forward to seeing you there!

Please note, as per Noho Pride 2019 rules, only service animals (under Title II and Title III of the ADA) are allowed at the march.

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Staff Council Website: smith.edu/staffcouncil

Staff Council Virtual Bulletin Board: smith.edu/staffcouncil/bulletin.php

Facebook: facebook.com/SmithStaffCouncil

Staff Council email: staffcouncil@smith.edu

Chronicle email: chronicle@smith.edu

Sign up for the Staff Listserv:

- go to <http://tinyurl.com/q7w6qdr>
- click on the blue "Join Group" button,
- choose your email preferences and click "Join Group."

Neilson Library Progress Update

March 5th, 2019

By Charlie Conant, Senior Project Manager, Facilities

As spring warmth replaces the chill of winter the Neilson Library Construction Project is also in transition as the focus on the project moves from pouring concrete to the erection of the new steel superstructure. Beginning on Monday, March 11 construction cranes will begin swinging steel to awaiting welders and the new building will slowly emerge out of the hole. The steel frame and concrete decks for the north and south jewel boxes and the 1909 core building will be completed by the end of summer 2019.

Despite a number of challenges on the project in 2018, including it being the wettest year on record since the Army Corp of Engineers started recording rainfall in 1950, the project is moving steadily forward for an opening in the fall of 2020. Facilities is now working with the Neilson library staff to put together a plan for reoccupying the library that will minimize disruption to the campus community. Details and milestones for the move back to Neilson and Alumnae Gymnasium will be available early in 2020.

Work is also underway in the south basement as water proofing is installed and new concrete slabs are poured for mechanical equipment soon to arrive. The first air handler to be placed will be onsite in a few weeks and will be lowered into the south subbasement. The new connector tunnel between Alumnae Gymnasium and the Neilson south basement is under construction and existing mechanical tunnels are being prepared for new utilities to be run between the two buildings. Though Alumnae Gym is still in design, the project is scheduled to be completed a few months before Neilson Library.

It is heartening to see the west pavilion parapet wall rebuilt and reassuring going forward to know that all of the 1909 masonry has been soundly reinforced. The project has come a long way since the early utility work in Neilson Drive back in March of 2017. We look forward to seeing all the parts come together as this remarkable building starts to take shape at the heart of the campus.



Smith Community-Building Book Group Launched

By Barbara Solow, Assistant News Director and
Jessica Drawe, Administrative Assistant

The Smith Community-Building Book Group, a collaborative project of the Staff and Faculty Councils, has launched! The group is meeting four times this semester over lunch to discuss issues raised in Ijeoma Oluo's *So You Want to Talk About Race*. The sessions are facilitated by three Smith community members with experience at running group conversations: SSW professors Josh Miller, Peggy O'Neill and SSW Dean Marianne Yoshioka.

The idea for this book group came from three members of Staff Council--Maddy Neely, Barbara Solow, and Brian Bocchino with the collaboration of two members of Faculty council--Kate Queeny and Alice Hearst. Working together in response to President Kathleen McCarthy's call for Innovation Challenge Grant ideas, they submitted a successful proposal to run a pilot project aimed at bringing students, faculty and staff together to talk about issues related to race and community on campus. The organizers hope to continue the book group to further help build connections among staff, faculty and students, especially around difficult issues.

The Smith community responded positively to invitations to join the book group. More than twice the number of faculty and staff signed up than could be accommodated by the project cap of 25 participants. Students were somewhat harder to recruit, largely due to their academic schedules, but enough signed up to ensure that the book group membership would represent each cohort equally.

At the first meeting February 5, organizers outlined the history and goals of the project and facilitators established ground rules for discussions. Participants then split into three groups to tackle some guiding questions, including what they were left thinking/wondering about after reading the first two chapters of Oluo's book, and what were the most difficult—or liberating—parts of the reading.

The planning committee is collecting feedback from participants in the pilot project, with an eye to offering it again to more campus community members.



The College's first computer appeared in 1967.

We're moving to Workday!

By Ellen Wall, Manager of Strategic Projects

Smith is implementing a new administrative system, Workday. Over the next two years, this cloud-based software will gradually replace the outdated Banner system that supports our human resources, financial, student information, and advancement work. The new system will address many of the limitations you (our community) have reported with Banner over the years. The new system will also allow us to modernize our business processes and support you more effectively now and for many years to come. We will begin using Workday for human resources, payroll, and student employment functions on March 31, 2019. After that time, we will not use Banner, Hiretouch, or JobX for those functions. Beginning March 18th, there will be several weeks of training to members of the campus community. All faculty, staff, and student employees will receive emails explaining more about the move to Workday and the options for training. Check the [Workday website](#) (Smith login required) frequently for the training schedule and more information.

EAP Program Offers Free Referrals

By Barbara Solow, Assistant News Director

When Jen Blackburn was looking for advice recently about how best to help her father-in-law relocate to the Pioneer Valley, she turned to a source close at hand: Smith's Employee Assistance Program (LINK: https://www.smith.edu/sites/default/files/media/Documents/HR/benefits_eap_services.pdf).

With one phone call to the program's 800 number, Blackburn—a longtime administrative assistant in the Poetry Center—got the help her family needed.

“My father-in-law has some health issues and we were looking for a high level of care,” she explains. “Through the EAP, we were able to get in touch with one of their case specialists who had comprehensive information to share. We didn't have to do a lot of digging around.”

Now more than a decade old, the EAP program provides Smith employees with six free, confidential counseling referral sessions for help with issues including legal services, elder care, parenting struggles, stress relief—and more.

The benefit (LINK: <https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/hr/benefits>), which is offered to Smith employees and their household members, operates a telephone referral service from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday—or 24/7 if the matter is urgent.

All a staff member need do is call 800-828-6025 and identify themselves as a Smith employee or dependent. A specialist from e4Health will help set up an appointment with a licensed local counselor.

Lucinda Williams says she keeps the EAP's telephone number posted on her refrigerator after finding out 14 years ago how useful the program could be.

Williams, acquisitions supervisor in Smith Libraries, called the EAP when she was suddenly faced with the prospect of caring for three foster children in addition to her four kids—all but one, teenagers at the time. “We had a social worker helping us but still, there were times when I just needed general advice and reassurance,” she says. “I could call the EAP and someone would talk to me. I got some great advice!”

Since then, Williams has recommended the program to a number of co-workers for help with issues such as how to talk to a troubled relative or write a will.

The six free counseling sessions are offered per issue, so if another concern arises, employees remain eligible for assistance.

Also, college employees who have used their six annual sessions through the EAP can utilize their mental health benefit through Harvard Pilgrim to continue talking with the same counselor. For details about those benefits, call Harvard Pilgrim at 888-333-4742 or visit the website (LINK: <https://www.harvardpilgrim.org/>)

Had an Experience with OptumRX?

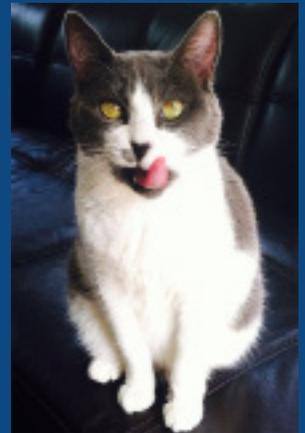
The Staff Council is collecting feedback from staff members who have used OptumRX, Smith's new prescription drug plan. We'll use the information to report to HR on how well the plan is working. You can submit comments to staffcouncil@smith.edu. Feel free to use your name--or to share anonymously.

Losing Together, Everyone Wins

By Louise Krieger

Nearly every Tuesday for the last 15 months, a group of staff members has gathered to attend a Weight Watchers at Work (WW@W) workshop to laugh, share stories, recipes, challenges, victories ... and weight loss. I don't have an exact figure, but I'm guess-timating we've lost the equivalent of three staff members during our time together. But, we've gained so much more in terms of healthier lifestyles and understanding our relationships to food and health, as well as cross-campus friendships. These intangible results are not only major successes and achievements for us as participants, but they also translate into huge wins for the college at large—among the most obvious are a healthier, happier employee body that has expanded and strengthened personal and professional relationships between its members, less sick time logged, and lower health care costs.

It's hard to overstate the meaning and value of this weekly gathering to many of its participants. Personally, I've been a Weight Watchers (and now WW) member on and off since I was very young (remembering with horror the early years when 4 oz. of "organ meats" was required weekly and ketchup was made by boiling down tomato juice ... ugh). With all the choices for weight loss programs in the world, WW always provided—for me—the best combination of nutrition and psychology—both backed by ongoing scientific research—and long-term sustainability. With Weight Watchers' re-branding to WW ("Wellness Wins"), the organization is expanding its focus to take the pressure off the numbers on the scale and fine-tuning its messaging around healthy eating, movement, and general lifestyle. The highlights of the updated program include a long list of "zero point foods" that are readily available and a phone app that allows you to scan bar codes in the grocery store. These tools, plus the valuable time and location convenience of having the workshop on campus, make the process infinitely customizable to each individual. Now that I'm older, my focus is less on weight loss than on maintaining a healthy weight—which, as anyone who has ever dieted will tell you—is much harder than either losing or gaining. I'm finding it



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email us at chronicle@smith.edu



easier this time around to focus less on the scale and more on building healthy, long-term behaviors around food and health. While I certainly re-joined to reduce, weight loss has been only a small part of what I've gained in participating in this group.

WW has had a very successful run at the college this time, longer than other times it's been offered. I'm not sure what to credit that to, but the current group would very much like to see it continue and benefit even more individuals. As is often the case, the original group of between 30 and 40 participants has "caramelized" to between six and 10 each week, and we face some very real and non-negotiable minimums (15 paying, i.e. non-"Lifetime" members) to continue the official meetings. Several members have agreed to respond to any staff or faculty member who might be interested and has questions about the program. I'd like to thank them for their willingness to help spread the word and encourage you to contact them: Betsy Adams, Diane Benoit, Lia Brassord, Sandy Bycenski, Chris Carr-Hill, Marti Hobbes, and Louise Krieger. (We're all in the SmithMail directory.)

The convenience factor of having this resource right on campus makes a big difference in the likelihood of getting there every week, thus greatly increasing our success rate; plus, as co-workers, we start out with shared experiences that make the meetings fun and enjoyable. Who knew we'd gain so much by losing?

Column 1: Zeke by Kristin Morse, Tulip by Christina Barber Just, Onyx by Kate Aloisio, Sadie by Audrey Voskoboinik, Sawyer by Lynn Cocco, Waffy by Lindsey McGrath, Sylvester by Johanna Walter, Samson by Kimberly Lebron, and Roper by Leslie Marie Aguilar

Column 2: Pfender by Samantha Pleasant, Olivia by Lara DeLucca, Mr Henry Lee Doddle by Kelson Smith, Piper by Lauren Shea Warner, Ringo & Bonnie by Paula Lopez, Parker by Madelyn Neely, Mr Belvedere by Deborah Letourneau, Oreo by Charles Dougherty, Stella & Benji by Pamela Dods, Quigley & Sport by Mark Umstot, and Tucker by Alison Schoen

Pet Corner

