

**Staff Council
University of St. Thomas
Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2004 -- 1:30 - 3:00 PM**

Members present: Chris Cognetta, Laurie Dimond, Barb Dunker, Rod Kirkwold, Meg Krekeler, Andy Leet, Joanne Rhoades, Erin Thigpen, Diane Tibodeau

Members absent: Nate Rolloff, Randy Scott

Guests: Julie Schwalbach, Jacob Cunningham and Barbara Gorski

Laurie Dimond began the meeting at 1:30 p.m. Barb Dunker read a brief reflection from the *Lutheran Hour Ministries Daily Devotions* entitled "Living Simply."

Laurie then asked Jacob Cunningham, volunteer coordinator with Campus Ministry, to talk about the VIA and VISION programs. VIA ("Volunteers in Action") is a student-led organization that facilitates volunteer teams working with community organizations.

VISION is a faculty-staff program coordinating national and international service experiences. The six components of the VISION program, identified by Campus Ministry, are service, simplicity, spirituality, community, inter-cultural exchange and justice issues. The last VISION trip was to Honduras during J Term 2002. Each year, fewer and fewer staff/faculty have participated in the program. Funding the trip is an issue. Participants in the program are required to raise the funds needed through fund raising projects or personally pay for the trip. Staff/faculty who did go on a trip used vacation or PLT time.

How do we revive interest in and revive the VISION trip program? A next step would be to find a group willing to take this on and organize the fund raising, etc. A suggestion was made to contact Gene Scapanski and/or Nancy McGrath for input regarding the various mission and diversity initiatives they are working on.

Rod Kirkwold indicated interest in volunteering to provide carpenter or other similar services to neighbors of UST. The Alumni Association sponsors two community clean-up days each year and there might be a possibility to partner with their efforts. Working within our own community is of interest. Jacob said that he envisions working with the Staff Council as a resource. He would be interested in ideas from Staff Council and its constituents and explore opportunities to work together.

In that regard, Barbara Gorski then talked about the work she does as community service director within the College of Business and also described the opportunities available through the Center for Community Partnerships. Barbara talked about

the *Business 200* program, a community service requirement for all undergraduate business major students, and the benefits the students have realized with their volunteer work. Volunteering should be a two-way street. There are many, many volunteer opportunities available in our community and by taking part in an area of interest to each of us we not only provide needed help but also get much in return. The Center for Community Partnerships can be a conduit and match the interests of staff with opportunities in our community. There are people who want to volunteer but just don't know how to go about getting something lined up. Barbara indicated that she would be willing to coordinate making opportunities known and available to staff.

(As a follow-up to the February 18 meeting, Jacob Cunningham has looked into local opportunities for staff and found a group that does basic maintenance/gardening/clean-up work for the elderly in the Mac/Groveland area. He has met with the program organizer and will pass along that connection. The VIA student leaders have expressed their interest in having staff take part in their trips, and Jacob is meeting with Fran Gretz to begin talking about future staff VISION trips.)

Diane Tibodeau gave an update on the Staff Council election process. A mailing is going out to all non-exempt staff asking for nominations to the Council (due by March 15). Once the nomination deadline has passed, Diane will make contact with the nominees and ask if they would be willing to have their name go on the ballot. If they agree, Diane will ask them for a brief bio. The ballot will be mailed out on March 25 with voting to end by April 8. Election results will be announced at the staff appreciation breakfast.

Progress on details surrounding the staff appreciation breakfast (April 21) was discussed. The video produced for UST's celebration of 100 years of athletics will be shown; the "Just Showed Up Band" will provide entertainment. Erin Thigpen and Nate Rolloff will handle the invitations, which should go out the last week of March. The breakfast RSVP should be used as the door prize entry. Laurie will ask that a reminder be sent to managers/directors that staff members should be allowed to attend the breakfast. Meg Krekeler will take care of preparing name tags. Staff will be asked to participate in a donation drive for the Family Service Center (a program coordinated through Catholic Charities.)

Laurie was asked to make mention of the March 5 *Up 'til Dawn* fund raising event. Participating students raise funds for St. Jude's Children's Hospitals through collecting donations for staying up all night.

Charlie Keffer contacted Laurie and asked for a nomination from the Council to be a part of the Assoc. Vice President, Human Resources search committee. Laurie asked that anyone interested in being on the committee let her know of their interest.

Committee reports -- because of time constraints, reports were held for the March meeting.

Affirmative Action --
Budget Advisory --
Charitable Giving --
Child Development Center --
Diversity --
Elections -- see above.
Employee Recognition --
Fringe Benefits --
Minneapolis Operations --
University Committee on Women --
University Council --
Budget --
Healthy U --
Mission Committee

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

**Next Meeting: March 17, 2004
St. Paul Campus -- AQU 210
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**

Council Members

Chris Cognetta	Food Service	2-4140	TMH235
Laurie Dimond	Academic	2-5300	JRC153
Barbara Dunker	Administrative	2-6920	AQU121
Rod Kirkwold	Physical Plant/Sec	2-6542	PHP111
Meg Krekeler	Minneapolis	2-4272	TMH331
Andrew Leet	Academic	2-5600	JRC333
Joanne Rhoades	Administrative	2-4342	TMH105
Nathan Rolloff	Administrative	2-6506	AQU217
Randy Scott	Minneapolis	2-4100	MOH203
Erin Thigpen	Administrative	2-6508	AQU221
Diane Tibodeau	Academic	2-6321	#5016

Staff Council Mailbox: #4387

Staff Council Website: <http://www.stthomas.edu/staffcouncil>