

STAFF COUNCIL BEGINNINGS

Did You Know? - An ad hoc committee was formed in August 1989 to formulate a mission statement and by-laws for a **Staff Council** here at USI. The group was officially recognized in July 1990 and members of the ad hoc committee were:

- Janel Allen
- Roberta Edgerson
- Judy Goen
- Ginny Hall
- Ron Harvey
- Jenny Head
- Ross Hettenbach
- Courtney Klingelhoef
- Carol Mann
- Mary Lue Russler
- Rose Scruggs
- Steve Selby
- Roxanne Seibeking
- Bill Washburn
- Dr. Emmet Edwards, advisor
- Cindy Brinker, advisor

They used a copy of Indiana University's by-laws and still refer to Robert's Rules of Order as a guide. The first officers were: Roxanne Seibeking, Chair; Debbie Weigand, Vice Chair; and Julia Yancey, Secretary.

Did You Know? - The first **Employee Picnic** was held on Friday, June 17, 1994. There was a box to collect donations for Archie's Food Closet. 467 tickets were issued to employees to attend the picnic which served grilled hamburgers and several side dishes. Staff Council later voted that the picnic should be held in spring, starting in 1995.

Did You Know? - The **Giving Tree** was originally started as an outreach of Student Affairs. While brainstorming at a Student Affairs Retreat, Dr. John Byrd, former vice president for Student Affairs, asked for ideas their division could do for the University community. Donna Moore, Chris Jines & Pam Hopson formed the idea for a giving tree for needy students and/or staff. Student Affairs agreed to purchase four artificial trees to be placed around campus. Staff Council took over this yearly mission in 2001 and created criteria forms of eligibility. There were 34 individual people who received gifts that first year.

Did You Know? - Lois Stevens, Employee Relations committee member, planned the first **Adopt-A-Spot** for Staff Council which started in May 2002. The location was originally in circle between the old Rice Library and the University Center. Lois put out the word Staff Council needed flowers and a hodgepodge of flowers was planted.

Did You Know?– The **Employee Ambassador Program** was proposed by Employee Relations Committee and organized by Kim Greenlee, Human Resources, in 2001. Margaret Flewallen and Barb Goodwin were the first Ambassadors that contacted new USI support staff. The program was patterned after Student Ambassadors.

Did You Know?– The **Employee Bible Study** was started by Chris Jines and Martha Gilbert when Staff Council was brainstorming ideas on how to get support staff more involved with each other. The bible study was implemented in 2002 and has 6-8 people in regular attendance.

Did You Know?– The **Support Staff Employee Recognition Award** was created in 2007. During USI’s re-accreditation process, Staff Council representatives Chris Jines, Don Broshears, Terry Martin, Yvonne Floyd, and Sheree Seib, met with evaluator Dr. Joaquin Villegas from the Higher Learning Commission on September 26, 2006. Dr. Villegas informed Staff Council representatives his institution had a recognition award for support staff and suggested the idea to have a similar award at USI. Chris Jines suggested having a “traveling” trophy to recognize a support staff member.

Over the next several months, Chris Jines, Karen Anderson, and Angela Torres met with Donna Evinger, Human Resources Director, to create criteria for the Support Staff Performance Recognition Award. President Hoops provided a \$500 monetary award to be presented along with the trophy. The first award was presented at the University’s Support Staff Luncheon in fall 2007 to the recipient Kim Schauss.

Did You Know?– The **No Smoking** was implemented in February 1994 after people complained about the smell coming through the ventilation system of the Orr Building. Steve Helfrich, Director of Operations, installed no smoking signs on campus buildings. In 2005, Staff Council was instrumental in upgrading the policy to “no smoking within 30 feet of a building”.

Did You Know?- Nancy Byrd, Human Resources Director, proposed the “**first**” **Staff Council Retreat**, held in July 1994.

Did You Know?– The **Employee Discount Program** was the result of brainstorming in 1998 and implemented in January 1999, providing discounts to USI employees from area businesses. It was called the “University Savings Incentive” program. Cards were issued with the various business names on them and the discount amount/type.

Did You Know?– Staff Council was instrumental in decreasing the amount of service years it takes for support staff employees to **accrue vacation time**. Currently, 20 days of vacation are accumulated after 11 years of service; previously, 15 years of service were required. This policy change became effective on July 1, 2001.

Did You Know?– That Staff Council successfully lobbied for **reclassification of support staff** after the Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Committee was here in 1996? For example, clerical workers were classified as Secretary; now they are categorized as Office Para/Professional with levels beginning at Administrative Clerk up to Senior Associate. Similar job re-classifications were created for Maintenance/Service, Computer/Technical, and Supervisory. Higher levels within these classifications usually require completion of an Associate or Bachelor's degree.