Annual Report by Council Committee

Awards

The 2011-2012 Awards Committee was comprised of the following members:

Tris Ottolino, Lesley Gilbert, Holly Holliday-Jones, Deborah Haliczer, Nancy Apperson, Phil Young, Dawn Roznowski (co-chair)*, and Dana Gautcher (co-chair).

*Dawn served as co-chair until November 2011 when she took a job off campus. Although a replacement co-chair was not officially named, Debbie Haliczer provided a great deal of leadership and support to the committee.

Fall Semester 2011

The committee met in August to discuss the responsibilities of the committee. Time frames and deadlines were set for the year and co-chairs were named.

In October, the committee convened to plan the SPS Presidential Award for Excellence selection Process. Publicity was run in NIU Today and an email was sent to all Deans, Directors, and Chairs as well as to all SPS Professionals regarding the call for nominations. The deadline for submission of nominations was December 1, 2011.

The committee received 11 nominations by the deadline. The nominees were: Terry Borg – Director of External Programs, College of Education, Dean’s Office, Steve L. Estes – Academic Adviser, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Advising Office, Todd Latham – Assistant to the Chair, Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology, and Foundations, Jane Mall – Director, College of Business Corporate Relations / Experimental Learning Center, Kevin Meyer – Marketing & Instructional Media Content Developer, Media Services, Patricia Ottolino – Professional Development School Coordinator, College of Education, Michelle Pickett – Director, Academic Advising Center, Deborah Pierce – Associate Provost, International Programs, Mark Pietrowski Jr. – Associate Director, CLAS External Programming, Jason Rhode – Assistant Director, Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, and Gilbert Sebenste – Staff Meteorologist, Environmental Health and Safety.

After reviewing the nomination letters and supporting letters the Awards Committee met on January 4, 2012 to deliberate. The committee forwarded following names to President Peters for his approval: Todd Latham, Michelle Pickett, Deborah Pierce, and Jason Rhode. Dr. Peters upheld the nominations. The committee decided to provide formatting guidelines to nominators in upcoming years to ensure consistency (as much as that is possible) among nomination packets.

Spring Semester 2012

In January, the Awards Committee presented the 4 finalists to the SPS Council. They were unanimously approved.

The Presidential Award recipients were notified via hand delivered letter in late February. The seven nominees who did not receive the Presidential Award were placed on the list to receive an SPS Certificate of Recognition at the annual awards ceremony.

During the month of February the Awards Committees sent out another call for nominations regarding the SPS Certificates of Recognition and the SPS Service Award. The call went to SPS only.
The Council voted on the SPS Service Award recipient in March and approved the SPS Certificate recipients. Awardees were as follows:

**SPS Service Award**: Dana Gautcher – Director, Office of Student Academic Success and Anne Hardy – Director of the Scholarship Office.


The SPS Awards Ceremony took place on April 17, 2012 from 2-4:30pm in the Homes Student Center Ballroom. Mollie Montgomery of Human Resources arranged for the room, decorations, refreshments, the Presidential Awards plaques, programs, and press coverage. The committee arranged for speakers, flowers, and the SPS Service Award plaque and the SPS Certificates of Recognition. The event was well attended.

Because there was not funding available for SPS Development Grants during FY12, the SPS Awards Ceremony marked the last official act of the Awards Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dana H. Gautcher

**Communications Committee Members**: Steve Builta, Lesley Gilbert, Gail Hayenga, Janet Love-Moore, Donna Smith, Brian Walk, Rachel Xidis (Chair).

During 2011-2012, the Supportive Professional Staff Council Communications Committee carried out the ongoing tasks of:

- Monitoring the SPSC email box
- Maintaining and posting items to the SPSC website
- Coordinating with other SPSC committees to create and distribute both printed and electronic mailings pertaining to SPS events and relevant campus issues.

**Goals and other tasks accomplished:**
- Designed SPS Council banner (with Events committee)
- Worked with Ad Hoc PR Committee to create and distribute first e-newsletter
- Updated and converted SPSC website to new NIU templates
- Designed SPSC info card to replace the brochure, as a take-away piece to distribute at events.

**Projects for next year:**
- Coordinate creation and distribution of fall and spring issues of the SPSC e-newsletter.
- Collaborate with the Technology committee to create dynamic info pages for each Council representative on the SPSC website.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachel Xidis

**Constitution and Elections**
The Constitution and Elections committee completed elections to the council, committees of the university, officers of the council, and second SPS representative to University Council. The committee filled vacancies throughout the year. An election schedule was developed in cooperation with the Technology Resources committee.

**Events**
Members of the SPSC Events Committee: Anne Hardy (Chair), LaMetra Curry, Samantha Fisher, Liz Harris, Gail Hayenga, Janet Love-Moore, Mark Pietrowski, Rachel Xidis

Events by Date:
1) October 20, 2011, Brown Bag Luncheon in Campus Life Building. Guest speaker was Jim Lockard, Vice President of the NIU Annuitants Association and Legislative Committee Chair. Jim presented an update on pension and healthcare reform. 32 attendees.

2) November 15, 2011, NIU Football Tailgate. Held on Faculty/Staff Appreciation Day, the SPSC sponsored a pre-game indoor tailgate party at Pizza Pro’s. 22 attendees.

4) February 23, 2012, Luncheon in the Chandelier Room. Guest speaker was Dennis Barsema. Mr. Barsema gave a motivational presentation about “Doing What You Love.” 51 attendees.


6) April 4, 2012, Brown Bag Luncheon in Diversions Lounge. This panel format featured David Changnon (University Honors), Randi Napientek (Student Academic Success), Julia Spears (Student Engagement), Carolinda Douglass (University Assessment), Mike Stang (Housing & Dining) Bill Nicklaus (Institutional Planning). Topic was an update on institutional initiatives related to the goals for student success and engagement as encouraged by Vision 2020. 36 attendees.

7) June 1, 2012, Brown Bag Luncheon in Diversions Lounge. Guest speakers were Deborah Haliczer and Nancy Apperson from HR. Topic was “How to Cope When Everyone Around Me is Retiring!” 21 attendees.

Goals Accomplished:

1) SPS Council banner designed and purchased to display at SPS events.

2) Registration system (“NIU Shopping Cart”) purchased and designed to accommodate on-line registration and pre-paying for events.

New Business for 2012-2013:

1) Develop a calendar for events for the entire academic year. Post on website. Possible flier if funding, or add to the e-newsletter.

2) Design t-shirts for council members and all SPS. Make available to order through the NIU shopping cart.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Hardy

Finance
The Finance committee was successful in establishing the council budget. The committee considered and approved expenditures in support of the merchant shopping cart, SPS Council banner, Skyroom reservation and refreshments.

Legislative
The Legislative committee created a Legislative Information page to assist SPS constituents that included: do’s and do not’s, tips and examples, and how to stay informed. The webpage also included information on how to contact elected officials at the local, state and federal level. The committee added Annuitant information for NIU and the state association.
Technology Resources
The Technology Resources committee has assisted in the distribution of information from council to the SPS constituency. The committee distributed and reported election information, developed and tested the merchant shopping cart.

Workplace Issues
2011-2012 Workplace Issues Committee Members: Julia Lamb (co-chair), Kathy Smith (co-chair), Patricia Anderson, Deborah Haliczer, Ryan Harris, Anne Petty-Johnson, Michael Kavulic, Laura Lundelius, Debra Miller, and Sam Morreale

- Temporary SPS Employee Benefits
  - Vested Temporary SPS Employee proposal was approved in principle by the University Benefits Committee which recommended that HR conduct an impact study of proposals concerning change in status and benefits for temporary SPS employees to “regular” status. Status- Still at HR

- Re – hiring of NIU Retirees
  - Resolution – approved by SPS Council (January meeting) (see attached)
  - On hold pending state legislation – HB 4996 (Legislative updates at http://www.ilga.gov/)

- 360 Degree Performance Evaluations
  - Mandatory evaluations - will continue to monitor status of these evaluations
  - Request by Workplace Issues Committee to have a current supervisor utilizing 360° evaluations discuss procedures and outcomes-these performance evaluations – will continue to follow up with this request.

- Communication of available student support resources to SPS employees
  - Focus on “caring” for our students and campus morale
  - Workplace Issues Committee will continue to gather information on available resources

- Statement of Professional Ethics for Members of SPS at NIU
  - Revisit and review per University Council’s review of a more formal grievance procedure for students concerning faculty and staff
  - Campus wide “code of conduct” – continued discussion
  - Recommend that all SPS council members read statement and make recommendations to WI Committee; statement available online at http://www.niu.edu/spsc/resources/ethics.pdf

- Flowchart of Resources re: employee complaints
  - Todd Latham and Steve Cunningham (HR) working on this
  - What are the options before filing a formal grievance?

- Reclassification of position - SPS/CS
- Workplace Issues Committee looking into pros/cons of position reclassifications
- Request still at HR

- Organized workshop for all SPS employees to discuss and deal with recent and numerous NIU employees retiring and the impact this will have on workload and stress levels
  - “How to Cope When Everyone Around Me is Retiring” workshop, June 1, 11:30 AM – 1 PM; guest speakers, Deborah Haliczer, Employee Relations and Nancy Apperson, Employee Wellness

- Provide resources and information on issues of workload and stress re: retirements and pension issues in SPS Council Newsletter (July 2012)
  - Being discussed and organized with Workplace Issues and Communications committees

Respectfully Submitted,
Julia Lamb

President’s Comments

Key Issues Completed by Council
- Temporary SPS Benefits
- Review of SOEEA Procedures/Compliance/Components
- SPS Awards/Service Milestone Recognition
- SPS Newsletter
  - Committee Features
  - Events
  - Announcements/Elections
  - Topics of Interest
  - SPS Presidential Awards for Excellence
  - President’s Address
- NIU One Card
- Resolution Regarding the Rehire of Retired NIU Employees
- Merit Guidelines
- Completion of the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Relations
- Support for the Office of the Ombudsman

SPS Council Items Pending HR Review
- Temporary SPS Benefits Proposal
- SPS Awards/Service Milestone Recognition
- Resolution Regarding the Rehire of NIU Retirees

Acquired Resources/Assets
- NIU SPS Merchant Account
- SPS Council Banner
Areas of Concern
- Mass Retirements
- Pension
- Eroding benefits
- Late payment to health providers
- Work load
- Mandatory Supervisor Training
- Evaluations and Job Descriptions for all SPS
- Double Dipping
- Paths for promotion/advancement
- Salaries
- Salary Survey
- Transfer of SPS to Civil Service by SUCCS
- Employee Morale

Carry Over Items to 2012-2013
- Faculty and Staff Appreciation Day Events
- APAC Tiered Parking Proposal
- Mandatory Supervisor Training
- Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor Election and Evaluation
- SPS Handbook
- Article 11 Changes to the APPM

The SPS Council held a retreat in July to prioritize council issues. This provided an opportunity to have additional dialogue on how best to address the needs of SPS, provide support to SPS employees, and create a more positive work environment. The SPS Council voted to participate in the 2012 NIU Wellness Fair. This event was well attended and the working group provided information on division representation and conducted a survey. The survey results were reported to council and used to guide committee chairs. Council completed a yearlong guest speaker initiative that brought SPS representative of committees of the university before council to educate members, provide information, and receive feedback.

Respectfully Submitted,
Todd Latham
President