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President's Corner



Greetings Operating Staff,

I hear you. I know you are frustrated and running on fumes. So many of us are overworked and underpaid, some covering the work of vacant positions without proper compensation. Empty promises are no longer sufficient, and our colleagues are leaving NIU for other opportunities in concerning numbers.

The issues we are facing are not new; they predate the pandemic and budget impasse, and even the current leadership team. Pay compression, issues with classification, difficult SPS-to-civil service transitions, ineffective supervisors, understaffing, lack of respect in the workplace – these are taking a significant toll on all of us.

Things are not hopeless, however. OSC is advocating for you and we have leadership willing to listen.

We are asking leadership for a commitment to prioritize staff salaries by conducting a salary assessment, changing the approach and philosophy regarding compensation and establishing avenues for salary increases.

We are also asking for the president's goal of enhancing training, leadership, professional development and succession planning to be accompanied by accountability to established metrics and reporting on results. And when we do promote NIU employees, we must make sure they are equipped with the information they need to manage and the skills to lead with integrity and fairness.

OSC and the Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC) are working together on a process proposal for job description reviews and additional pay when vacant positions cause additional work. We've also established an emergency fund for employees facing financial crisis. That fund is still in the fundraising stages, and we hope we can count on donations from those who have the means so we can begin to accept applications for grants. I and many others are partnering with ADEI and HR to administer training about respect in the workplace and other topics – and I hope you will be supported in attending.

In the meantime, I see your hard work and dedication to NIU and I appreciate each and every one of you.

Forward together,

Holly Nicholson

President, Operating Staff Council 2021-2023

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Confessions of a Rookie

Rookie: Carolyn Atkins

Office Administrator, Mathematical Sciences

Hire date: Nov. 27, 2017

Welcome to the final 2021 edition of Confessions of a Rookie. Today's episode brings us in touch with Carolyn Atkins, an office administrator in the math department. Good morning Carolyn, how is everything going today?

Wonderful! I enjoy working with my co-workers, meeting new people from all walks of life and helping students, staff and faculty!

It sounds like you really like your job. That comes in handy for NIU! So tell our dear readers, other than loving work, what's your favorite place in the world?

Germany!

Wow...Germany...that's a bit hard to get to for a weekend getaway. Although, I'm sure you've done crazier things, right?

I climbed the [Zugspitze](#) without any gear!

Oh, gesundheit! It does seem that you have an adventurous side. Climbing Zugspitze without gear, wow! You probably have a mild side too, right? What does that mild side look like...less climbing and a lot more reading, perhaps? What was the last book you read?

I last read David Copperfield.

How magical! So, if I were to ask you what three individuals you would like to share a meal with, what would be your answer? Probably authors, am I correct?

Jane Austen, William Shakespeare and Martin Luther.

Ah, those three are definitely authors... but no meal, then? I guess everyone must eat before the meet-up. That's okay. I'm sure no one minds not eating at mealtime. Let's have one last question- what is your secret talent no one knows about?

I am a pro at changing tires.

Well, that is something. Next time I need a tire rotation, I am coming to see you!

That's all we have time for this edition. If anyone is interested in playing along, we hope to have a new set of questions for the January/February 2022 edition so reach out to me at RMeyer@niu.edu if you've worked at NIU less than five years.

Prioritizing Your Health and Well-being

Recreation staff understands that prioritizing your health and well-being is more important now than ever before. We are looking to partner with you to help you "Have Fun, Live Well and Feel Your Best." For a limited time only, we will be offering bonus time for any annual memberships purchased through **Dec. 5, 2021**. The annual memberships purchased will not expire until Jan. 1, 2023! This is an incredible value as our annual memberships are normally only good for one year, so act fast before this bonus time expires.

Do you want to try before you buy?

Memberships for non-students are available.

Try out NIU Recreation for a first-time visit at no cost. This one-time offer includes access to any Recreation facilities available on the day of use, including the Recreation Center, Anderson Swimming Pool and the Outdoor Recreation Sports Complex.

There are two easy options. Visit the Recreation Center or call 815-753-0231 on the same day you redeem your one-day membership. **Create an account** ahead of time to speed up the process. Once you have an account and activated your pass, you can book a **swim time** or **group fitness class** online.

The trial day pass ends at closing time of the facilities available on the day redeemed. You are not permitted to check out day-use equipment (e.g., basketballs or racquets). You may visit with a current Rec member who can check out equipment.

Testing Services Now Located in Campus Life Building

Testing Services is now located in the Campus Life Building, Room 120. We look forward to seeing you in our newer office as you drop off your classroom tests to be processed. If you have questions about Testing Services, email testing@niu.edu, call 815-753-1203 or [visit their website](#).

Important Dates

As we become enveloped in our day-to-day jobs, we sometimes forget about our available benefits and services, policies and procedures, expectations and how to go about finding resources when we need them. Here are some important links to get you started:

- Finals week: **Dec. 6 – 11, 2021**
- End of Fall Semester: **Dec. 11, 2021**
- Holidays:
 - **Nov. 25, 26, 2021**
 - **Dec. 24, 25, 27, 31, 2021**
- Administrative Closures: **Dec. 23, 28, 29, 30, 2021**

Operating Staff Handbook

Do you even know there is such a thing as an Operating Staff Policies and Procedures webpage?

There is, and we urge everyone to peruse through the topics included. You might find an answer to a question you didn't know you needed. You can find the [operating staff policies](#) on the Human Resource Services website.

Happy reading!

Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship

MyScholarships makes applying for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship easy. All students need to do is complete and submit the general application and then answer an additional question to be considered for this scholarship. The system will be open Nov. 15, 2021 through Jan. 31, 2022.

For more [information on the scholarship](#) go to the [OSC website](#).

To apply, dependent students should go to the [Scholarship Office website](#).

Direct Students to MyScholarships

The general application for the majority of competitive NIU scholarships for the 2022-2023 academic year opens Nov. 15, 2021. Please remind your students about this great opportunity to apply for scholarships by using one application!

Students can sign in to NIU's campuswide scholarship application system with their NIU ID and password and will be able to work on the general application from Nov. 15, 2021 through Jan. 31, 2022. For more information please visit the [MyScholarships webpage](#).

While students can find the majority of NIU's scholarship via the MyScholarships system, they should also be encouraged to check with their academic department of other possible opportunities and/or resources. You can also tell students about the opportunities for outside/private scholarships. Additional information and resources can be found on the Financial Aid and Scholarship webpage under [outside scholarships](#). The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in-person or via phone, email or video calls. The [FAQ section](#) is also a great resource for staff and students.

Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

815-753-1395

finaid@niu.edu | niu.edu/financial-aid

Service Awards

September 2021

5 Years

Diane Gorecki – Family and Consumer Sciences
Ehrick Howland – Public Safety
Allison Maurer – Office of Institutional Communication
Kiley Meyer – Biological Sciences

10 Years

Lisa Anderson – Registration and Records
Gregory Fagerberg – Physics
Joseph Merritt – Development Operations
Steven Searls – Infrastructure Services

15 Years

Anne Arne – Graduate School
Kerig Brake – Residential Dining Service
Lemonia Lekkas – Residential Dining Service
Charvette White – Regional Center Operations

20 Years

Tina Hatfield – Building Services
Ramon Holland – Public Safety
Gregory Hulmes – Operations
Mark Kahn – Building Services
Taesam Kim – Chemistry and Biochemistry
William Leighly – Health and Human Sciences Survey Research Laboratory
Daniel Pontarelli – Building Services
Brian Walk – Web and Internal Communications

October 2021

5 Years

Jacob Abell – Building Services
Vickie Beyer – Residential Dining Service
Justin Broitzman – Heating Plant
Benjamin Gonzales – Building Services
Michell Luster – Materials Management
Mark Schrader – CHANCE Program
Michael Sebourn – Residential Dining Service
Audra Verchimak – Biological Sciences

10 Years

Theodore Campbell – Constituent Resource Management
Anthony Carter – Heating Plant
Felicia Owens – Geography
Steven Peerboom – Heating Plant
Joseph Sigler II – Public Safety
Constance Storey – University Honors Program
Gary Weishaar – Libraries

15 Years

Kellie Dyslin – Sponsored Programs Administration
George King – Building Services
Oliver Koriath – Office of Creative Services
Pamela Stangley – Health Services

20 Years

Caroline Kosmel – Career Services
Aleksandar Kosoric – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

25 Years

Marlene Bryant – Executive Vice President and Provost

Nominations for 2022 Operating Staff Outstanding Service Awards

For some members of our Huskie Pack, their job description is just the beginning of the story of the service they provide to their colleagues, our students and the community. Does that describe a member of your team, or perhaps even you? Nominations are open for the Operating Staff Outstanding Service Award – and this year you can nominate someone else or nominate yourself!

This award is presented each year to recognize individual Civil Service Operating Staff who make contributions to the university beyond a narrow reading of their job descriptions and also serve the community in which they live. Up to four individuals will be selected annually to receive the award which includes \$1,500 (considered taxable wages) and a plaque. The awards will be presented in the spring.

Eligible employees must be full- or part-time status civil service employees who have been continuously employed at NIU since Feb. 1, 2015, or before.

The nomination form and additional information can be found at go.niu.edu/service-award. Deadline for nominations is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 4, 2022.

Employment Changes

September 2021

Welcome New Employees:

Stephanie Arnold, Grants and Contracts Associate – Sponsored Programs Administration

Navneet Deosi, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards

Vernon Gochee, Account Technician II – School of Art and Design

Joseph Gruber, Admissions/Records Representative – Registration and Records

Dana Hoefle, Grants and Contracts Associate – Sponsored Programs Administration

Cody Hunt, Food Court/Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Service

Elizabeth Kravcik, Office Administrator – University Recreation and Wellness

Audrey Ledermann, Child Development Supervisor – Child Development and Family Center

Jon Miller, Program Adviser – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

Sherry Nelson, Staff Nurse I – Lorado Taft Operations

David Prim, Assistant Food Service Manager – Residential Dining Service

Gaylen Rivers, Program Assistant – Center for Black Studies

Chenfang Su, Program Adviser – Finance

Caitlin Teague, Grants and Contracts Associate – Sponsored Programs Administration

Kristie Voss, Events Administrator Associate – Convocation Center

Marianne Walker, Office Support Specialist – Kinesiology and Physical Education

Randy Young, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services

Retirements:

Nancy Overton Skelley, Administrative Aide – Enrollment Management

Separations:

Alicia Anderson, Business/Administrative Associate – College of Education

Rebekka Ayres, Events Coordinator – Holmes Student Center

Carissa Callahan, Business/Administrative Associate – College of Health and Human Sciences

Marissa Dordic, Program Adviser – Special and Early Education

Claire Duvall, Program Coordinator – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning

Fern Evins, Culinary Worker I – Residential Dining Service

Joseph Griffey, Program Coordinator – Nursing

Brandon Haley, Snack Bar Attendant – Residential Dining Service

Stuart Henn, Publicity-Promotion Associate – Art Museum

Christopher Manning, Resident Hall Attendant – Housing and Residential Services

Jennifer McAdams, Office Support Associate – Military Science

Jennifer Meier, Office Administrator – Music

Angela Orokoh, Program Coordinator – Precollegiate – Upward Bound

Justin Riner, Resident Hall Attendant Program Coordinator – Housing and Residential Services

Stephanie Shrum, Events Administrator Associate – Conferences Event Management

Christine Tluczek, Program Director – Intercollegiate Athletics

Victoria Wells, Child Development Supervisor – Child Development and Family Center

Corie Wild, Office Support Specialist – Management

October 2021

Welcome New Employees:

Bobbie Disrud, Culinary Worker III – Lorado Taft Operations

Tanya Galer, Program Coordinator – College of Business

Reinhard Miller, Maintenance Repair Worker – Lorado Taft Operations

Noah Min, Child Development Supervisor – Child Development and Family Center

Nicole Montiel, Publicity-Promotion Associate – Housing and Residential Services

Michael Newman, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Christopher Newquist, Financial Aid Coordinator – Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

Justin Olin, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Theresa Plazewski, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services

Kara Rominski, Customer Service Assistant – Human Resource Services

Diane Swanson, Office Manager – Center for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality

Brian Terry, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Amelevi Tossou, Snack Bar Attendant – Residential Dining Service

Dana Walker, Food Court/Snack Bar Supervisor – Campus Dining Service

Kelly Williams, Food Service Sanitation Laborer – Lorado Taft Operations

Death:

Douglas Moore, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Retirements:

John Berezinski, IT Technical Associate – Computer Science

Margaret Crittenden, IT Technical Associate – Application Services

Terry Halsey, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Separations:

Nicholas Campbell, Safety/Environmental Compliance Specialist – Environmental Health and Safety

Michael Cobert, Senior Business Manager – EIGERLab

Evan Forbes, Auditorium Technical Director – Holmes Student Center

Stefan Groebel, Financial Analyst/Planner Specialist – Budget Office

Heather Katkus, Events Administrator Associate – Intercollegiate Athletics

Lindsey LeMar, Human Resource Associate – Human Resource Services

Jaelyn Levitt, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety

Robert MeVickar, Sports Equipment Supervisor – Intercollegiate Athletics

Jose Rabelo, Snack Bar Attendant – Campus Dining Service

Julie Ream, Senior Events Coordinator – Convocation Center

Sydney Riebe, Office Support Associate – Allied Health and Communicative Disorders

Jeffrey Royce, Facility Operations Specialist – Holmes Student Center

Mary Soesbe, Office Manager – Counseling, Adult and Higher Education

Benjamin Walter, Building Service Worker – Building Services

Adam West, IT Technical Associate – Infrastructure Services

Rachelle Wilson, Anthropology Curator III – Anthropology

Shaunda Wilson, Police Officer – Public Safety

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