



Table of Contents

- President's Corner.....1
- Confessions of a Rookie..... 2
- NIU's Operating Staff Council Teams Group Open to All 2
- DeKalb Corn Classic 10K/5K Training Sessions..... 3
- History of the OSC: Part One..... 3
- Feedback and Concerns Anonymous Suggestion Box..... 3
- Donate to the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship..... 4
- Service Awards..... 4
- Employment Changes..... 5

President's Corner



Greetings Operating Staff,

I hope your summer so far has been everything you hoped for.

By the time this letter reaches you, you'll have received your one-time payment and nearing the first paycheck that contains the most recent salary increment (if you are in a bargaining unit going through contract negotiations right now, hopefully that time won't be very far in the future).

I, for one, am grateful for these benefits at a time when I truly needed them. I hope you also felt a burden lifted and your morale boosted, even if just slightly. After so many difficult years, it is certainly a relief to have a budget surplus and have the administration prioritize staff when distributing those funds. The graduated distribution was an encouraging precedent.

I realize there is still a long way to go regarding salary compression and fair pay. Commitments to address wages have been made and OSC will keep an eye on that progress. However, impactful change may take a long time.

If you find yourself struggling, please know your NIU colleagues are here to help. OSC oversees an **[emergency fund for civil service employees](#)** and you can apply for an available gift when a need arises.

If you find yourself with extra cash, donations to the fund are always welcome. We'd like to thank Human Resource Services for their recent coin drive, which brought in over \$100. Contact **cs-fund@niu.edu** if you would be interested in setting up a similar coin drive in your own office.

Make the most of summer; the semester will start before you know it!

Forward together,

Holly Nicholson
President, Operating Staff Council 2021-2023

hnicholson@niu.edu | **osc@niu.edu**

Confessions of a Rookie

Rookie: Tyler Collins

Materials Management, Central Receiving

Hire date: Nov. 15, 2021

In this edition of Confessions of a Rookie we sit down with Tyler from Materials Management, Central Receiving. Tyler has graciously agreed to answer our precise and probing questions that delve deep into his psyche; or maybe that's our psyche? Regardless, here we go!

Good afternoon, Tyler. You're in Materials Management, right? I know everyone has questions about the packages they receive. So, tell us, what's the biggest misconception people have about your department?

I'd say the most frequent misconception we encounter at Central Receiving is that everyone assumes my department delivers items. We do not. We also don't know when it will be delivered. We simply receive and route packages for delivery, which is handled by a separate department. It's also much, much more difficult to find specific items without a tracking number. If your vendor claims they sent a package through UPS or FedEx and don't have a tracking number, they're lying!

Interesting. So, your department is actually for centrally receiving the packages, and then you give the packages to the department that delivers them. Amazing!

Do you have a favorite thing about your position in central receiving?

I loved the idea of working close to home on a routine schedule. Before I came to NIU, I spent nine years working night shifts for a wind turbine company in the remote operating center. While I'd always considered myself a night owl, I spent the last few years missing the sun and having a life. NIU offered the opportunity to acclimate to a normal schedule with weekends and holidays off. Living only eight minutes away is also extremely convenient. It doesn't hurt that I work in the same department as a lifelong friend.

Friends are nice, or so I've heard. Or is that friends are weird? Maybe both, who knows? Since we're going with the weird theme, tell our readers what is the weirdest factoid you know?

That Caesar salad is technically Mexican food.

Things that make you go, hmmm. Caesar salad is Mexican food? I'm going to have to grab my handy dandy food history book now. Unless there's a food history show?

Oh! Show.... please tell us what you're currently watching or streaming.

Currently working my way through Arrested Development (again), The Boys, Umbrella Academy and Gravity Falls.

Oh, I like a couple of those. But are you sure you're not watching Sparrow Academy?

Okay — last question — If you could have an ultimate supply of one thing, what would it be?

Coffee. Always coffee.

Oh, coffee! My favorite! I think coffee is a must at NIU. Or home. Either way, it's a necessity.

Well, that's it for this edition of Confessions of a Rookie. Join us next time when it could be **you** who's picked to be the Rookie. We also accept volunteers. Contact RMeyer@niu.edu if you're willing to play along.

NIU's Operating Staff Council Teams Group Open to All

We have created an [OSC group in Teams](#) that is open to everyone at NIU. It is still in its infancy, but interested individuals should be able to ask questions and access upcoming agendas, previous meeting minutes and calendar appointments for council meetings. Please provide feedback to osc@niu.edu to help us make this group as effective as possible.

DeKalb Corn Classic 10K/5K Training Sessions

Recently you may have seen a promotion of the upcoming [DeKalb Corn Classic](#) 10K/5K race taking place across DeKalb and the NIU campus on Sunday, Sept. 25. We would like to invite you to volunteer or participate in this fun community experience.

In preparation for this event and in keeping with efforts to promote [well-being at NIU](#), the [Employee Assistance Program](#) is partnering with Glen Kamps of Dick Pond Athletics in St. Charles, Illinois to offer a **free**, 10-week supervised training program to all staff, faculty, family members and the surrounding communities.

Supervised and led by Kamps, the [Walk2Run program](#) will guide you as you increase your running potential and prepare to participate in and run the Sept. 25 Corn Classic. During the course of the 10-week program Kamps will offer in-person and email instruction, guidance and support.

Beginning Wednesday, July 13 at 5 p.m., participants will meet in front of Founders Memorial Library where Kamps will guide us through a 30-minute training session. We will then meet for the next nine Wednesday evenings at 5 p.m. leading up to the Corn Classic.

If you are interested in joining the Walk2Run program or have any questions, please reach out to Karen Smith at EmployeeAssistance@niu.edu.

History of the OSC

Part One

The first known meeting of civil service employees at NIU took place in January 1931, when approximately 30 civil service employees were employed on campus. The meeting was called to order by then-president Karl L. Adams, who stressed that employees should be courteous and considerate in all their contacts with students and faculty.

In 1961, a newer version of the council was formed and called the Nonacademic Council. Their first meeting was held on April 7, 1961, and served as an advisory group to the administration. Two representatives from each of the four divisions on campus were elected to the council.

The first order of business was to establish a constitution and bylaws for the group. The bylaws described the duties of the officers, the membership composition of the council, meeting times, requirements for election eligibility and election procedures. The [constitution](#) and [bylaws](#) are still periodically reviewed and updated as policies and employee needs dictate.

Feedback and Concerns Anonymous Suggestion Box

Do you have feedback or concerns but would prefer to submit them privately? Please send your input through the completely anonymous [virtual suggestion box](#). The box is open to operating staff, supportive professional staff, students, administration and faculty.

Service Awards

May 2022

5 Years

Veodies Jones Jr. – Campus Dining Services
Paul Watson – Application Services
Elina Wlaznik – Holmes Student Center

10 Years

Garrett Balbach – Application Services
Ronald Blomberg – Materials Management
Stephanie Brown – International Student and Scholar Services
Ryan Damhoff – Chemistry and Biochemistry

15 Years

Rebekah Kohli – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Rebecca Pritchard – Health Studies
Judith Puskar – Educational Technology, Research and Assessment

20 Years

Renée Bechtel – Human Resource Services
Christiane Ong-McCarthy – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning

25 Years

Stanley Erlien – Infrastructure Services
Barbara Whitesel – Sponsored Programs Administration

30 Years

Gail Jacky – Huskie Academic Support Center

35 Years

Ronald Barshinger – Libraries

June 2022

5 Years

Kyle Buehler – Admissions Systems Processing
Andrew Dolan – College of Visual and Performing Arts
James Lawson Jr. – Admissions Systems Processing
Colleen Quigley McAllister – Public Safety
Susan Smith – Institutional Effectiveness
Thomas West Jr. – Housing and Residential Services
Gireshabu Yemparala – Report Cards

10 Years

Michael Hildreth – Physical Plant
Abigail Lund – Student Affairs Central
Jessica Quinn – Office of Information Security
Jaime Schumacher – Libraries

15 Years

David Scharenberg Jr. – Environmental Health and Safety
Greg Wilhelm – Building Services

20 Years

Rosarin Adulseranee – Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development, Web Media and eLearning

25 Years

Gigi Beaird – Vice President, Marketing and Communications
Brian Conant – Libraries

Donate to the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship

The [OSC's dependent scholarship](#) provides financial assistance to NIU students who are the children of NIU operating staff (civil service) employees.

The scholarship is made possible by the fundraising activities of civil service employees. Last year, OSC gave three students scholarships, down from four the previous year. Due to numerous factors and the pandemic, donations have decreased.

We need your help!

Individuals can [donate several ways](#): By filling out and mailing a check and the donation form, by utilizing a payroll deduction or by calling 1-877-488-2648 or 815-753-1652.

How can your student apply to receive a scholarship?

Visit the [OSC Dependent Scholarship Awards](#) webpage for more information.

Employment Changes

May 2022

Welcome New Employees:

Taylor Curry, Program Assistant – College of Education
Akash Devendranath, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
Zion Doke, Security Guard – Public Safety
Patrick Finnigan Sr., Building and Grounds Supervisor – Lorado Taft Operations
Thomas Holt, Police Officer – Public Safety
Brendan Jimenez, Security Guard – Public Safety
Caryl Johnson, Admissions and Records Associate – Records and Registration
Srinivas Katakam, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
Diedrel Laster, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety
Steven McKinnes, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Michael Merrill, Maintenance Repair Worker – Lorado Taft Operations
Michael Ramirez II, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Vivian Seki, Program Assistant – Disability Resource Center
Jaiden Steele, Police Telecommunicator – Public Safety
Janice Steinkellner, Administrative Aide – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Cole Steward, Program Adviser – Student Athlete Academic Support Services
Venkata Vuppala, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
Heather Wilcher, Ticket Sales Assistant – Convocation Center

Retirements:

Stacey Bivens, Library Specialist – Libraries
Louise Calderone, Administrative Aide – Psychology
Jeffrey Farley, Pipefitter Foreman – Physical Plant
Cheryl Fuller, Office Support Specialist – Sociology
Helen Hopkins, Culinary Worker II – Residential Dining Service
Brenda Kehm, Office Administrator – College of Education
Patricia Liberty-Baczek, Office Support Specialist – Geology and Environmental Geoscience
Sandra McCartney, Administrative Assistant – Facilities Management
Lynne Meyer, Office Support Specialist – Foreign Language and Literature
John Moluf, Campus Planning Coordinator – Architectural/Engineering Services
Scott Olson, Procurement Officer Specialist – Procurement Services and Contract Management

Separations:

John Curran, Security Guard – Public Safety
Rebecca Drury, Culinary Worker III – Residential Dining Service
Kristen Lawrence, Marketing Associate – University Marketing
Sandra Manisco, Marketing Associate – College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
Wendy Marshall, Program Advisor – Special and Early Education
Kazim Mohammed, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
Julian Reese, Building Service Worker – Building Services
La Tanya Reme, Catering Supervisor – Conferences Event Management
Carlos Rodriguez, Police Officer – Public Safety
Jeniece Smith, Public Information Associate – Student Affairs Central
Veronica Teagus, Food Court/Snack Bar Supervisor – Residential Dining Service
Amelevi Tossou, Snack Bar Attendant – Residential Dining Service

June 2022

Welcome New Employees:

Catina Caldwell-Mead, Business/Administrative Associate – Housing and Residential Services
Lorelli Carlson, Admissions /Records Representative – Registration and Records
Andrew Digate, Program Director – Nursing
Maria Gardner, Radio Television Producer Announcer – Northern Public Radio
Fernando Gonzales, Customer Service Representative – Transportation
Pavan Gutta, IT Technical Associate – Report Cards
Alexander McCord, Human Resource Representative – Human Resource Services
Jacob Sladin, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Chad Vonderheide, Grounds Worker – Grounds
Susie Wofford, Customer Service Representative – Bursar

Retirements:

Daniel Cabrera, Program Coordinator – Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
Michelle DeJean, Marketing Associate – College of Business
Melinda Shelton, Housing Officer – Housing and Residential Services
Vicki Thompson, Office Support Associate – Residential Dining Services
Sophia Varcados, Graphic Design Manager – Office of Creative Services
David Wendelin, Program Coordinator – English

Separations:

Charles Cherry, Housing Administrator – Housing and Residential Services
Nicole Giardelli, Office Administrator – Allied Health and Communicative Disorders
Fernando Gonzales, Customer Service Representative – Transportation
Elsie Guerra, Police Officer – Public Safety
Amy Hernandez, IT Technical Associate – Registration and Records
Candace Humphrey, Human Resource Assistant Manager – Human Resource Services
Brandon Kraybill, IT Technical Associate – Application Services
Laura Legreid, Program Advisor – College of Engineering and Engineering Technology
Matthew Lalowski, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Jonathan Lindstrand, Administrative Assistant – Facilities Management
Christine Monteiro, Internal Auditor Assistant Manager – Internal Audit
Christopher Muasher Kerwin, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Andrew Reiss, Building Service Worker – Building Services
Derrick Risley, Procurement Officer Specialist – Procurement Services and Contract Management
Brian Scott, Laboratory Mechanic – College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Cole Steward, Program Adviser – Student Athlete Academic Support Services
Michael Storandt, Motor Vehicle Operator/Mechanic
Kristin Voss, Events Administrator Associate – Convocation Center

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