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## Staff Council Report

December 2, 2011

The Council met on October 25 at Bowie State University and on November 15 at the University of Maryland, College Park.

- 1. Vincent Novara, Chair, University of Maryland College Park Senate Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) met with the Council in October to ask for a statement of support regarding expansion of system-wide benefits and policy coverage to same-sex domestic partners. The Council approved the request. Specifically:**
  - USM Institutions should be authorized to offer the same tuition remission benefits for same-sex domestic partners enrolled at USM institutions that are available to spouses.
  - Same-sex domestic partners should be included in the policies, as appropriate, which allow USM employees to use sick leave for illness or injury in the employee's immediate family.
  - Same-sex domestic partners should be included in the policies, as appropriate, which allow USM employees to use paid bereavement leave on account of the death of any member of the employee's immediate family.
  - The inclusion of same-sex domestic partners in policies regarding family and medical leave should be executed, paralleling policies mandated by Federal law.
  - University policies related to nepotism should be extended to include same-sex domestic partners.
  - The expansion of system benefits to same-sex domestic partners may be considered a priority in the next go around of negotiations that will replace the Collective Bargaining Agreements set to expire on June 30, 2013 for the University of Maryland College Park. No changes to policies or benefits, such as those listed herein, for employees covered by collective bargaining may occur until after such negotiations take place, as appropriate.



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**2. Joint Faculty, Staff and Student Councils meeting was held on November 15<sup>th</sup>. The topics of discussion were:**

- **Merger:**
  - 1) How will the potential merger affect the quality of education that students receive in your institution?
  - 2) What are concerns and reservations that you have regarding the merger? What, in your opinion, are the potential benefits?
- **USM Budget**
  - 1) In the event that further cuts need to be made to the USM budget, what budget items do you believe should be impacted?
  - 2) How have furloughs affected your ability to teach your students (faculty), provide services to the university community (staff), and affect the quality of education and services you receive from the university (students)?
  - 3) What do you see as the potential effects of further increases in tuition and fees?
- **Family Leave**
  - 1) What are the existing policies in your institution pertaining to family leave?
  - 2) What recommendations would you make towards your existing policy?

**The Chancellor and the Secretary of Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) joined us for lunch and the afternoon portion of the program.**

**The next meeting is December 13 at the University System of Maryland Office**

**Submitted: Willie L. Brown, Chair,  
Council of University System Staff**