

Council of University System Staff's Term in Review (July 2004 – June 2005)

Board of Regents' Staff Awards

A CUSS initiative, the **Board of Regents' University System of Maryland Staff Awards** represents the highest honor bestowed by the Board of Regents for achievements of Exempt and Nonexempt employees from institutions of the University System of Maryland. The awards are presented to staff members who have demonstrated excellence in one of the following categories: (1) contribution to the institution and/or unit to which the person belongs; (2) service to students in an academic or residential environment; or (3) public service, within or outside the university. There are two awards given in each category—one Exempt and one Nonexempt—for a total of six awards. Each recipient will receive a \$1,000 stipend, and a plaque will be awarded. In addition, appropriate notices will be placed to publicize each person's accomplishments.

2004 – 2005 Recipients

Extraordinary Public Service to the University or to the Greater Community

Exempt Staff

Ruth Baker, Associate Managing Director

Salisbury University, BEACON

Nonexempt Staff

Carolyn Pritchard, Debt Management Counselor

University of Maryland, Baltimore, Financial Aid

Exceptional Contribution to the Institution and/or Unit to Which the Person Belongs

Exempt Staff

Sharon Biederman, Director

University of Maryland University College, Course Development, Undergraduate Studies

Nonexempt Staff

Dawn Johnson, Administrative Assistant I

Salisbury University, Dean's Office, Henson School of Tech. & Management

Outstanding Service to Students in an Academic or Residential Environment

Exempt Staff

Vaughn White, Director

Salisbury University, Multiethnic Students Services

Nonexempt Staff

Linda Dalo, Administrative Assistant II

University of Maryland, College Park, Undergraduate Academic Programs
College of Life Sciences



Bowie State University
14000 Jericho Park Road
Bowie, MD 20715

Coppin State University
2500 W. North Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21216

Frostburg State University
101 Braddock Road
Frostburg, MD 21532

Salisbury University
1101 Camden Avenue
Salisbury, MD 21801

Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252

University of Baltimore
1420 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

**University of Maryland
Baltimore**
520 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

**University of Maryland
Biotechnology Institute**
Executive Office
15825 Shady Grove
Rockville, MD 20850

**University of Maryland
Center for Environmental
Science**
P.O. Box 775
Cambridge, MD 21613

**University of Maryland
Baltimore County**
1000 Hilltop Circle
Baltimore, MD 21250

**University of Maryland
College Park**
College Park, MD 20742

**University of Maryland
Eastern Shore**
Princess Anne, MD 21853

**University of Maryland
University College**
3501 University Boulevard
East
Adelphi, MD 20783

**University System of
Maryland
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3300 Metzert Road
Adelphi, MD 20783-1690

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From Chancellor William E. (Britt) Kirwan

As the 2005-2006 academic year opens, the University System of Maryland finds itself in a much more advantageous position than it has in recent years. As you know, the 2005 Legislative Session was extremely positive for the USM. The session began with the Governor's proposed budget increase for the University System, as well as his commitment to growth in future funding. The Legislature, in turn, was overwhelmingly supportive of the USM's budget increases. In fact, support for higher education is one of the few issues that enjoyed wide-spread agreement in Annapolis. With this budget increase, the USM was able to moderate tuition increases (after two years of double-digit increases), cover mandatory costs, support a modest level of enrollment growth, and protect quality. Additionally, included in our FY 2006 appropriation is funding for a 1.5% COLA and merit increases. Furthermore, I am pleased that the state has reinstated a \$400 match for employee contributions to deferred compensation plans, for members of the State Employees Pension System - Modified.

While most of the news was positive, there was one area of significant concern; the increase in health care costs for state employees. Increased health costs are a national phenomenon that is playing out in Maryland. With the actions taken by the General Assembly to address rising health care costs, an employee choosing point-of-service health insurance coverage can expect to experience a premium increase, with the monthly premium formula changing from 15% employee/ 85% state to 17% employee/ 83% state. While I am concerned about the negative impact of rising health care cost on USM staff members, I also understand the difficult task facing the legislature to strike a balance in a challenging budget year.

As you know, one of the key reasons the Governor cited when announcing his support for the USM was the impact of our Effectiveness and Efficiency Initiative. Working with the Board of Regents, the Council of Presidents, the Council of University System Faculty, the Council of University System Staff, and the USM Student Council, we implemented cost savings, cost avoidance, and other efforts to streamline the USM to better meet the needs of the students we serve, while protecting the integrity of our academic and research programs and minimizing the hardship for our dedicated faculty and staff.

Throughout these efforts, I continue to be impressed with the dedication and commitment of CUSS. This diverse group of individuals—from across the University System—has stepped forward to work cooperatively and collegially for the betterment of System institutions and System staff. You are one of the USM's greatest assets and a driving force behind our rise to national eminence.

The Board of Regents and I commend Bill Crockett for his leadership as Chair over this past year. We also welcomed this year's CUSS Vice Chair, Angie Brickhouse. We look forward to continuing to work with the entire CUSS leadership team in the coming year including Marie Meehan, Secretary, Joe Hill as Chair Ex-Officio, members-at-large Judy Lowe and Queen Atterberry, and Rosario I. van Daalen, Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS.

I believe strongly that the Governor's and the General Assembly's attention to higher education will bode well for USM in the years ahead. Clearly they share our goal of providing affordable access to excellent programs and services for our students and for Marylanders. The efforts of CUSS have been a vital part of our success on every level and I look forward to our partnership continuing to yield productive and beneficial results.

Sincerely,

William E. Kirwan
Chancellor

For more information on the University of Maryland System's Office, the Chancellor's Office, and the USM Overview, go to the USM online at: www.usmd.edu

From the Chair of CUSS

To My Fellow Employees:

I am truly honored and privileged to have served as chair of this wonderful council and represent the staff throughout the University System of Maryland. As Chair of the Council of University System Staff (CUSS), I have had the opportunity to act as the pulse of the system staff and in turn communicate your thoughts and concerns to the Chancellor, Regents, and USM Presidents.

Shared governance is a vital component that can help us to face the present and future issues challenging the system staff and USM. The role of shared governance is one of 'shared vision and communication'. I believe that shared governance is a holistic venture, a journey which can only be successful if all of its parts truly define the whole process. Only a collaborative approach by all parties involved will make this a truly successful venture. I hope to continue the positive and cooperative relationships forged by my predecessors by being an active voice representing you on the many issues and concerns facing us.

The previous term witnessed a reformation of CUSS under the guidance and recommendations of the Chancellor's Council, the USM Board of Regents, and the Attorney General's Office. Under our revised bylaws, the transformation has meant that all constituent members are now from employee units excluded from collective bargaining. Approximately 8000 employees from across the system are represented by this council under shared governance. I would like to take a moment and express my gratitude and that of the council member's for our past chair - Joe Hill. Not only did Joe successfully guide CUSS during a turbulent time in its history, he had the very difficult task of guiding the restructuring of the council. Joe has been an active player in keeping the true spirit of shared governance vibrant for all staff that CUSS has represented.

Our first CUSS meeting of the term was held on August 24, 2004. Though the meeting's agenda was focused on forming committees and finalizing the executive board, several important topics were discussed. Since then the charge and focus of the council has continued to move forward. It is hard to believe that one year has passed. It has been exciting, challenging if not difficult, and one that offered compelling opportunities for us as System Staff. Highlights of the past term can be found later in this newsletter and in the committee reports.

Two issues of importance for the council occurred this term. (1) The successful adoption of Board of Regents Policy VII.1.40 which provides a definitive timeline for the conversion of Contingent II staff (state and auxiliary funded lines) to regular status based on service time. The council played a vital role in this policy and it is being phased in over the next two years with the first conversions beginning July 1, 2005. (2) The Board's approval of the Nonexempt Salary Structure based on the biennial market survey effective July 1, 2005.

The year has not been completely successful, and significant concerns have been raised that impact system staff (i.e. change in benefit levels, increased user fees for health care, change in benefit enrollment periods, etc). On the matter of University resources, the news is less optimistic and it seems likely we are losing ground faster than we are gaining. The problem the University System of Maryland is facing is that state higher educational funding is at levels less than it needs to be even though the state provided our first budget increase of 4.8 percent in two years. Lack of direct communication from state officials in regards to projected cost of health care expenses, changes in prescription drug plans, reduction of the proposed cola increase, and changes in open enrollment timelines have a major influence on our working environment.

Nevertheless, progress has been made. Our dental plan has improved albeit marginally. Staff can utilize both flex medical and child care programs to defray some of the projected increases in health care expenses. The State has set a maximum limit to the total pharmacy co-pay an employee will have to pay out-of-pocket in one year (\$700).

I also commend our members of the council for their constant diligence as together we continue the work as your voice within the USM. In the midst of shifting priorities, changing work environments, and dwindling budgets, council members so generously extended themselves to do the work of the council. I want to thank all the council members who have helped and tolerated me this past year. In closing, I would like to express my thanks to the Chancellor, Regents, USM Presidents, campus leaders and staff who have supported CUSS and its role within the University System of Maryland.

Bill Crockett, Chair - Council of University System Staff (2004-2005)
University of Maryland, Baltimore

CUSS Facts

CUSS is comprised of staff employees with representatives from the 13 institutions. Council membership is proportionate to the number of Staff employees at the individual institutions with a minimum of two representatives per institution. Recently CUSS membership was restructured to be comprised of exempt and nonexempt staff that is not covered under collective bargaining.

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of CUSS is to provide a voice for USM Staff concerns in reference to basic decisions that affect the welfare of the University System of Maryland, its constituent institutions, and its employees. CUSS functions in an informed advisory role in administrative areas and in the functional support aspects of academic matters. The council has been in existence since 1992 and was formed at the request of the Chancellor. It was codified in 1994.

Some Highlights of the Council's 2004 – 2005 term

1. Championed the initiative for the revision and implementation of the Contingent II Conversion to Regular Staff Policy (BOR VII.1.40) approved by the Board of Regents.
2. Refined and revised the award process and timeline for the BOR Staff Awards.
3. Completed a census of system staff that is represented by CUSS, ensuring accurate and proportionate representation from institutions on the Council.
4. Supported the Nonexempt Salary Structure revisions based on the biennial market survey.
5. Amended the CUSS constitution, with approval of the BOR, to allow full participation from member institutions.
6. Worked with the Chancellor and the System Office in ensuring that the FY06 Fiscal Budget included the 2.5 percent merit increase for staff.
7. Monitored the Maryland Legislature this past session on issues of State Employee Health Care Benefits.
8. Represented the voice of System Staff at the Chancellor's Council and Board of Regents meetings, and continued to act in an advisory role on issues and BOR policies impacting staff.

We encourage you to visit the CUSS website while you are learning about USM and see the council's numerous institution representatives who work on your behalf: www.usmd.edu/Leadership/Workgroups/SystemStaff



Council of University System Staff at the December 2004 meeting with Chancellor Kirwan at the USM Office in Aldephi.

Committee Reports

Benefits and Compensation (Chair: Andrew Rein - University of Maryland University College)

The committee advised the CUSS Chair about the issue of the State's funding of health care plans. The committee gathered and disseminated information in regards to the health care plans and expressed concern over the change in the timing of open enrollment for USM employees. The committee also compiled a list of Contingent II Contract employee benefits offered by the individual USM institutions with the goal of making the offerings more consistent throughout the entire System. The group plans to finish the revisions of the BEST Policy (for staff development).

Communications (Chair: Mary Pat Armstrong - University of Maryland Baltimore County)

The committee revised and updated an orientation packet for new members and alternates while photographic highlights from each institution's campus and geographic area were added to the CUSS website this year. Please go to: www.usmd.edu/Leadership/Workgroups/SystemStaff/cuss-retreat.html to view the pictures. The committee worked with the USMO's Office of Information Technology to make the necessary changes to the website throughout the year, and wishes to thank Fred Hayes and Norwin Malmberg for their tireless efforts on our behalf. We are also grateful to Mary Pat Armstrong, a former CUSS member, who worked diligently on this newsletter.

Community Development (Chair: Colette Becker - University of Maryland, Baltimore)

The Community Development Committee's main charge was to oversee the nomination and review process for the annual Board of Regents' Staff Awards. In September 2004 nomination packets were sent to the presidents' offices at the thirteen (13) USM member institutions. The nomination and review process began in early fall and was completed in a very timely manner ensuring that the award ceremony could be held in spring 2005. Ten institutions submitted thirty-three (33) nominees for consideration in the three categories. Community Development wishes to thank the CUSS members who diligently reviewed the nomination packages and voted on the final selections.

Legislative (Chair: Sam Sibanda - University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute)

The 2005 session ended at midnight on April 11 with 826 bills passed. The Legislative Affairs Committee monitored USM-related and other bills of interest to USM staff during the 2005 Maryland Legislative session. The committee made major strides in promoting USM staff awareness of legislation with direct impact to staff and at the same time worked as a conduit between staff and the Maryland Legislative Body. It's important to mention that although certain issues remain unresolved, issues of particular importance to CUSS were monitored carefully (i.e. health care costs, collective bargaining issues, "COLA", and salary adjustments). In the final analysis, unlike the 2004 session, session 2005 presented us with budgetary progress as the USM system received its requested 5% budget increase while most other State of Maryland agencies received budget reductions. The approval of this increase was due to the successful lobbying efforts of the various constituents of the USM system.

Proactive measures adopted by the Committee: (1) CUSS members identified campus Legislative Liaisons; (2) Liaised with USM's Legislative Lobbyist, Vice Chancellor Joe Bryce, to improve the flow of information about pending and upcoming legislation; (3) Began development of a mechanism for CUSS members to identify their area representatives for signature and letter drive petitions; (4) Monitored the web site <http://www.mlis.state.md.us> and shared pending and upcoming legislation of interest to USM and CUSS constituents; (4) Identified bullet points to communicate to legislators the value of higher education to the State of Maryland and the necessity of recruiting and retaining a quality workforce to implement the vision and goals of the respective USM institutions; and (5) Targeted the rising cost of healthcare.

USM related Bills Passed in 2005

- SB487/HB1283 – (Public records) these bills allow USM institutions protection from disclosure of trade secrets, confidential commercial information etc.
- SB514/HB1285 – Bills to clarify UMUC as a public institution
- SB486/HB96 – Bills dealing with Optional Retirement Plan.

Please visit the web site <http://www.mlis.state.md.us> for a more comprehensive review.

**July 2004-June 2005
Representatives and Alternates
Present & Past**

Representatives

Dan Albert
University of Baltimore

Mary Pat Armstrong
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

Queen Atterberry
University of Maryland,
College Park

John Barber
University of Maryland,
Baltimore

Colette Becker
University of Maryland,
Baltimore

Bernadette Bell
Coppin State University

Brenda Blake
University of Maryland
Eastern Shore

Angie Brickhouse
Towson University

Jim Citro
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

Frank Clancy
University of Maryland,
College Park

Bill Crockett
University of Maryland,
Baltimore

Joan Doremus
Towson University

Mary Graham Fisher
University of Maryland,
College Park

Gloria Gaguski
Towson University

Jim Hartsock
University of Maryland
University College

Jay Hegeman
Frostburg State University

Joe Hill
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

Clacie Hubbard
Salisbury University

Hermetta Hudson
University of Maryland
Eastern Shore

Heather Johnson
University of Maryland
Center for Environmental Science

Chenita Kollock
University of Maryland
Eastern Shore

Judy Lowe
Salisbury University

Marie Meehan
Bowie State University

Melissa Moore
University of Maryland,
Baltimore

Barbara Morris
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

Dale O'Neal
Bowie State University

Carol Prier
University of Maryland,
College Park

Mary E. Reed
University System of Maryland Office

Andrew Rein
University of Maryland
University College

Roy Ross
University of Maryland,
Baltimore

Judy Sabalauskas
University of Baltimore

Cindy Schuster
University of Baltimore

Sam Sibanda
University of Maryland
Biotechnology Institute

Robert Smith
Frostburg State University

Donna M. Taylor
University of Maryland
Biotechnology Institute

David Wakefield
University of Maryland,
College Park

Rosario van Daalen
Chancellor's Liaison to CUSS

Alternates

Jessica L. Bird
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Dottie Holland
Bowie State University

Debbie Horstman
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Jesse Ketterman
Frostburg State University

Bobbie H. Lee
University of Maryland
Biotechnology Institute

Starrla Levine
University of Baltimore

Gary Love
Frostburg State University

Phyllis Lovito
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Patricia Payne
Towson University

Christine Routzahn
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

Rick Tysor
University of Maryland
Biotechnology Institute

Janine M. Vienna
Salisbury University

Resolution

The following resolution was drafted and adopted at the Council's May 2005 meeting. This resolution acknowledges the contributions made by individuals of the USM Board of Regents and those within the USM that have been vital in the success of the council this past term.

Resolution (passed on May 24, 2005)

Whereas, The Council of University System Staff (CUSS) would like to express our gratitude to the Board of Regents, Chancellor Kirwan, and the USM Presidents for continued support on the various initiatives and projects of the Council this past term.

Whereas, CUSS wishes to convey their appreciation to the Board of Regents of the University System of Maryland for providing a responsive and engaging atmosphere for the Council to effectively function within the spirit and intent of shared governance. The Council is grateful for the continued support each Regent has shown for all USM employees.

Whereas, CUSS expresses extreme gratitude to Regent (The Hon.) Joseph D. Tydings for his exceptional service while a member of the Board of Regents and his continued support on behalf of all USM staff. The Council is grateful for his past five years of service as a champion for the University System of Maryland and its staff. His voice and presence will be greatly missed.

Whereas, CUSS wishes to thank Regent Clifford M. Kendall for his exceptional service this past term as chair. CUSS recognizes Chairman Kendall for applying his own unique brand of vision and leadership. The Council is grateful for his candor on staff issues and his continued support of the System's staff.

Whereas, the Executive Committee wishes to convey our appreciation for the continued support from Chancellor William E. Kirwan; Vice Chancellors Joseph Vivona, Irwin Goldstein, & Susan Schwab; Associate Vice Chancellors Joseph Bryce & Anne Moultrie; and our Liaison to the Chancellor, Rosario I. van Daalen in providing direction, providing information, and facilitating the shared governance process.

Whereas, the Executive Committee and the Chair express gratitude to each of the 13 USM Presidents who actively engaged, challenged, and supported initiatives brought from CUSS to the various Board of Regents meetings and at the Chancellor's Council sessions.

Whereas, the Chair wishes to convey his appreciation for the staff in the Chancellor's office that provided assistance throughout the term including Kathleen Ryan, Betty Bowen and Dana Flanders.


Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Executive Committee and the Members of the Council of University System Staff express sincere gratitude and appreciation to each of the aforementioned individuals who helped make this past term significant and successful. The Council looks forward to the upcoming term and its continued role in shared governance.

Council Members represent the thirteen (13) institutions and the Systems Office (USMO) for the USM. For more information on the Council of University System Staff contact your Institution Representative or visit: www.usmd.edu/Leadership/Workgroups/SystemStaff



2004-2005 Executive Committee

(l to r): Joe Hill, UMBC; Rosario van Daalen, USM; Angie Brickhouse, TU; Chancellor William E. Kirwan; Bill Crockett, UMB; Marie Meehan, BSU; and Judy Lowe, SU. Not pictured – Queen Atterberry, UMCP.

 **COUNCIL
OF
UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM
STAFF**

