

## **Staff Advisory Committee**

**March 18, 2008**

**11:30-1:30pm – Sharpe Refectory, Dining Rooms 8&9**

Present: Stephanie Altomari-Cavanagh (Fill-In Recorder), Doreen Burgers, Ruth Crane, Ron Dunleavy, Pan DeSimone, Heather Dominey, Jeff Fitton, Deborah Healey, Walter Hunter, Karen Leonard (Chair), Nancy Magers, Lori Maguire, Maritza Marti, Chris O'Neil, Sarah Peri, Joe Sarno, Lisa Sheehan, Lea Snyder, Kristen Soule, Alfred Tente, Steve Tompkins, Amy Umstadter, Courtney Wuethrich

Absent: Angel Hilliard, Beth Murphy

### **Announcements**

The minutes for the 3/4 meeting were approved.

Karen thanked all SAC members who volunteered to work at Commencement. She requested that those who were still interested in volunteering but had yet to do so to please inform her or Ricky Gresh.

Karen also discussed the recent visit she, Courtney, Sarah, and Ron had with the RISD Staff Council. The committee has 30 elected representatives, five of which are on the executive board: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Recording Secretary and Parliamentarian, Corresponding Secretary and Historian, and Treasurer. The formality of their meetings was also noted as well as the number of visitors that appear to attend their meetings. Steve McDonald had been the guest presenter during the visit and spoke about FERPA laws. The group also discussed upcoming events at RISD, mainly pertaining to museum and gallery events, and then moved onto new business, at which time Karen, Courtney, Sarah, and Ron left the meeting. Steve asked if the group witnessed any procedural items they believe should be inducted into the current Brown SAC meetings to which Karen noted the possibility of including more visitors in the meetings. Amy asked if there was a discussion about future partnerships between the two groups and Karen stated that had not been discussed. A discussion took place about the gallery nights for staff that offer both RISD and Brown staff member's free admission.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **Staff Participation Subcommittee – Pam DeSimone**

No report was given.

#### **Outreach & Communications – Lea Snyder and Steve Tompkins**

No report was given.

#### **Events – Jeff Fitton**

Jeff noted that the Morning Mail to announce the "Best of Brown" launching has been sent. He thanked the committee for their assistance. Jeff stated that Rebuilding Together would be held on 4/26 and School One would be on site. He also noted that SAC would again be accepting charitable donations of professional clothing at Staff Development Day. Details of this drive would be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

#### **Guest Presenter - Ibrahim Essa, Human Resources/Benefits**

Karen introduced Ibrahim Essa, Benefits Communication Specialist, who was in attendance to present on the Benefits and Wellness Programs offered by the Benefits

Office. Ibrahim discussed the different programs available to staff as well as requested the assistance of the committee regarding how to better promote the available programs.

Ibrahim gave an in-depth look at the Benefits website, pointing out the "Headlines" section of the Benefits page, where all news about upcoming programs as well as information pertaining to any benefit changes or enhancements is posted. Ibrahim offered information on how to participate in the numerous programs via training.brown.edu. Some current programs offered are Unwind, for stress reduction, and Smoke Free, a smoking cessation program. Ibrahim also spent time explaining the annual "Planning for Retirement Series" which is a 7-part series assisting employees in handling the many aspects of planning for retirement.

Ibrahim discussed LTC Insurance spring enrollment process which will begin on 4/10-5/2. A rep from RetirementGuard LLC will be on campus to meet with employees, answer questions, and provide information. Appointments can be scheduled by calling them directly at the number provided below.

Ibrahim also discussed Financial Tuesdays where TIAA-CREF reps are available on campus on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays for each month, while Fidelity reps are on campus on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of each month. In addition, TIAA-CREF provides a telephone counseling service that can provide information about your retirement needs by utilizing the number listed below.

Finally, Ibrahim noted that Brown University had received the Silver level award in 2005 for the Wellness Programs. Our renewal application will be submitted this year for this 3 year award.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Ibrahim requested feedback from the committee on how to better promote the current list of programs to employees. Lea suggested adding a link from the SAC page to the Benefits sites.

Karen questioned if there are any mental health programs offered other than the Unwind program. Ibrahim stated that there are several support groups on campus and the plan is to offer more mental health wellness programs. Additionally, Ibrahim referenced the Faculty Staff Assistance Program with Liberty Mutual as a resource that is available to all staff with personal concerns. Ibrahim also circulated a sign up sheet for SAC members to be included on the distribution list for the *Wellness Champions listserv*.

Questions were also answered about the walking program timing as well as the timing for Shape UP RI. Discussion also took place on the projection utilized during certain Wellness presentations and which rooms should be avoided for their projection and or lighting problems. Questions were raised about a gym reimbursement program for those who buy a gym membership. Walter stated that the benefit is continuously reviewed and considered by Drew Murphy, Director of Benefits, based on the cost effectiveness.

***Contact Numbers listed during presentation***

RetirementGuard LLC - 1-888-793-6111 or e-mail: [helpme@retirementguard.com](mailto:helpme@retirementguard.com)

TIAA-CREF telephone counseling service – 1-800-842-2776

Wellness Programs: <http://training.brown.edu/index.php?campaign=Wellness>

### **Advisors' Report – Walter Hunter**

Walter noted that the University has announced the wage and benefit changes for FY 2009. He noted that the salary pool was set at 3.5% for FY 09 and that the maximum premium contribution for 2 person and family plans would be capped at 38% (reduced from 50%) effect January 1, 2009. He also noted there will be a small increase to the current yearly parking cost. The committee also discussed parking options on campus. There was also a discussion about campus crime, as well as the incident involving the Hillel staff member over the weekend. Despite the aforementioned incident, Walter stated that campus crime was down as Public Safety has increased their visibility throughout campus.

### **Staff Concerns**

Staff concerns were addressed during the Advisor's report, so Karen requested that remaining time be used for a roundtable discussion for committee members to discuss their experiences on SAC thus far. Doreen stated that she has enjoyed her time on the committee and in an effort to alert her staff to the fact she is a SAC member, she prints and posts the approved minutes for each meeting in her department. Courtney suggested a well-received idea of voluntarily adding a line to the end of a member's email signature that would identify him/her as a member of SAC. This would be one more way of communicating SAC's presence to campus staff. The Outreach & Communications subcommittee is taking the lead on drafting a standard signature.

A SAC member noted that since the construction at Athletics, and the move of lot 90, the walk to the lot has become increasingly dark as the path is not lit. Walter requested that the SAC member email Public Safety and cc. Chief Porter to make him aware of this.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.