President’s Staff Advisory Council

July 2016

Report to President Paxson
Dear President Paxson,

The President’s Staff Advisory Council (SAC) has been active in many projects in the first half of 2016 in accordance with achieving its mission of facilitating active and direct communication between University staff and senior administration as well as increasing staff morale and providing opportunities for staff networking. Much of this year so far was spent building a solid foundation and reputation on which to build. We feel confident that we have made progress, and have really been able to establish a presence on campus. We are proud of the work that we have done this year and of our accomplishments, and look forward to continuing our work over the rest of this year.

Much of our work is committee based, and in January we met to determine which ad-hoc committees would be established and determined that our efforts around volunteering and community service should continue. We also wanted to actively support the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and formed a committee with a charge to find ways to support the plan and create staff initiatives to increase dialogue and education around diversity and inclusion issues. These ad-hoc committees joined our two standing committees, Events and Participation and Outreach and Communications. All four committees have been actively engaged in supporting staff and creating opportunities for further dialogue, networking and engagement. You can read more about their efforts in the committee sections following this introduction.

Outside of committee work, SAC has also taken part in many council wide initiatives.

- In December of 2015, we held the first annual Staff Holiday Party. Over four hundred staff members attended and we heard positive feedback for months. We were also able to showcase Brown staff talents by utilizing a staff member’s band as the entertainment. We were able to include the local community by asking businesses to donate raffle prizes bringing Brown staff members into local business and providing prizes to staff that resulted in increased morale. We also held collections for both the Boys and Girls Club of Providence as well as the Rhode Island Food Bank, which gave staff a chance to give back. Staff expressed feeling really appreciated by Brown and we greatly appreciate the financial contribution from the Office of the President to make it happen. Staff members have shared they were looking for more opportunities to come together organically to form authentic relationships with their coworkers and colleagues and we hope to make the Holiday Party an annual tradition.
SAC also took on co-sponsorship of Staff Development Day on June 7th, 2016. We coordinated all of the volunteer opportunities, weighed in on the Diversity and Inclusion programming track, organized the Farmer’s Market, provided all of the raffle prizes for the end of the day, held two different collections for local community organizations and also hosted the end of day Staff Summer Party and Lip Sync Battle. Once again, the feedback was immense and overwhelmingly positive. Staff members were able to get to know each other better in a relaxed setting and take some time to have a little fun after an incredibly challenging year. Staff once again expressed feeling appreciated by Brown and were once again grateful for the financial contributions from both the Office of the President and the Provost to make the event happen.

Another new initiative that we took on this year in conjunction with the Provost is the Staff Summer Reading Program modeled after the First Readings Program. In the first two hours that the sign up document was open, we had 165 staff members sign up. We were able to accommodate 100 staff members, as well as SAC members for a total group size of 123. All staff members received the book at no cost and will participate in a half day program where we will discuss the book in both small and large groups. Staff members have really appreciated being part of the dialogue around both the book and Diversity and Inclusion on campus.

We also conducted a staff survey this semester. The results were both interesting and helpful. Some themes included staff wanting more opportunities to engage with the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, most specifically through lectures and trainings, as well as issues pertaining to women on campus such as waiting periods for maternity leave. Staff also expressed a lack of knowledge of other areas on campus which led us to believe the resurrection of the Ambassador Program may be beneficial. We received many questions about benefits as well so we plan to hold an open forum in the next two months to address some of the issues with a representative from Human Resources.

Overall, we have had a very busy and productive year. We are very proud of all that we have been able to accomplish with regard to our mission and are looking forward to continuing our work in the second half of the year. We are incredibly appreciative of your ongoing support of staff at Brown. Please feel free to reach out if you have any guidance or ideas that would improve or add to our work and we hope you enjoy reading the rest of the report which will outline the work of our committees.

Joie Steele and Steve Nelle
2016 SAC Co-Chairs
Events & Participation Committee Report

Committee members:
Tracey Cronin - (Co-Chair) Bio Med Graduate/Postdoc Affairs
Donna Frazier - (Co-Chair) Controller's Office
Shannon Benjamin - Environmental Health & Safety
Michele Calnan - University Event & Conference Services
Ben Garvin - Office of Sponsored Projects

The Events & Participation committee is charged with bringing staff together in an effort to provide both social and networking opportunities. We feel strongly that if staff form relationships not just with the staff in their areas but across campus, they will feel more connected to the University which will result in higher levels of staff morale. We agree with the sentiment from Building on Distinction that “We are a community that celebrates intellectual curiosity, creativity, and individuality; appreciates the power of collaboration among individuals with different perspectives, backgrounds, and areas of expertise; and fosters research and education that strive to have a positive influence on society.” Through our events, we hope to provide staff with the opportunity to collaborate across campus and get to know staff members with different perspectives and backgrounds to enhance their experience of working at Brown. We have received feedback from staff on our events that we would like to highlight:

- “These social events really contribute to the sense of community I already feel as a Brown employee. They're a great way to get questions answered and meet new people you'd not normally meet. I have met people from HR, OSP, and academic departments that I normally would not have crossed paths with during the regular work day.”

- “Since being new at Brown, I was very hesitant about going, but at the events that I did attend, the SAC members made you feel as if you were included in all the conversations and the Brown community as a whole, it is a great time to meet coworkers that you would never have an opportunity to meet.”

- “I think they are a wonderful morale booster, especially if you are new to Brown or would just like to interact with your coworkers.”

- “It's nice to have opportunities to interact with colleagues from other departments and meet new people. I think it really helps to get to know colleagues especially from other departments on a personal level because for me, it helps ease my nerves when I have to ask for help. It's also great to meet people you interact with regularly in person and see what their personality is like since sometimes the tone in emails can be different than what both persons intended.”
“Being a staff member is stressful sometimes, and being able to de-stress with Brown staff who understand the Brown working culture is great. I have met some of my closest friends from the Meet & Mingles, and I look forward to meeting more people.”

“Through SAC's meet and mingles, and other events, I now know dozens of people I would not have had an opportunity to socialize with otherwise. I now feel more connected to Brown and comfortable about attending other Brown events, as I will almost certainly run into someone I met through SAC.”

“All the gatherings I have seen and attended have their own flair and unique qualities. What unites them all is the fact that they're Brown People Centric and this has instilled a sense of pride and unity in me. Beyond that, the sharing of food, fun and stories is what I want out of a workplace and the gatherings have managed to instill that, as well as provide an environment to meet & mingle- hence the aptly named title!”

“Celebrating the holidays together has enriched my sense of belonging and I speak highly of the workplace, almost ashamed to call it a ‘work'place because there is so much fun, production, unity and more...”

Listed below are the different types of social and networking opportunities the Events and Participation committee has organized since December of 2015.

- **Evening Meet & Mingles**
  
  The “Meet & Mingle” program has been in place for just around three years. Over the past year, we’ve seen an increase in participation from eight to ten initially to now averaging around forty people at each event. Since many of these staff members work in different offices, people who might not necessarily meet in person are now able to put a face to a name. This year we also started assigning SAC members to serve as greeters at the event so nobody would arrive without getting a face to face welcome from a SAC member. Other added benefits to these events include serving as recruitment opportunities for SAC as well as Brown giving business to local establishments. So many of the local businesses that we have held events at have expressed their appreciation for our patronage.

- **Lunch Time Gatherings**
  
  We are mindful of the fact that not everyone can attend events in the evening so we’ve set up some opportunities for lunchtime gatherings which are co-sponsored by the Stephen Robert ‘62 Campus Center. Last year, we had two events, a trivia contest and bingo in the Underground at the Campus Center that ended up being over the 80-person capacity and became standing room only. This year, we re-located to the Kasper Multi-Purpose Room and had a turn out closer to 100 staff members.
• **Campus Tours**

We also set up campus tours with former SAC Member Gary Martins. This is another opportunity for staff to come out at lunch and learn more about the history of many of the buildings on Brown’s campus. These have also been very popular.

**Full Listing of SAC Events since December 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>Staff Holiday Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 14, 2016</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Milk &amp; Money</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 24, 2016</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Wild Colonial</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 18, 2016</td>
<td>Staff Bingo &amp; “March Madness” (Broadcast NCAA Men’s Championship Games)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 22, 2016</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Grad Center Bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 22, 2016</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Whiskey Republic: Featuring Ben Garvin’s band</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 11, 2016</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Rick’s Roadhouse (Jewelry District)</td>
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<td>June 7, 2016:</td>
<td>Staff Development Day – Summer Party / Lip Synch Contest</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 16, 2016:</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Duck &amp; Bunny</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28, 2016:</td>
<td>1st Brown Staff Field Day – Games on Pembroke Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 20, 2016:</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Mingle – Flatbread Pizza Co</td>
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**Other Planned Events – Dates TBD**

- Bowling Night
- Campus Tour of Main Green Buildings
- Open Mic Night
- Karaoke at the Boom Box – Dean Hotel
- More performances from Ben Garvin & his band
- Lunchtime Trivia
- Coffee & Conversation – Lunchtime Gathering of Staff to discuss SAC and any staff related issues
The Events committee is proud of the work we have done this year. Our goal is always to broaden our scope of events and reach out to as many staff as possible. We are helping to build awareness of SAC as a University resource as well as working to build a sense of community and inclusiveness. As some of our members have said, many of us are becoming more than colleagues, we are becoming friends. We believe that this helps to embrace Brown’s goal of “cultivating a community...with the diversity and breadth of experience required for excellence...” and helps to reinforce “the power of collaboration among individuals with different perspectives...” We look forward to planning additional events this year that will continue to emphasize building community among one of Brown’s most valuable resources – its Staff!
Outreach and Communications Committee Report

Committee members:
Carol Leone (Co-Chair) - Vice President of Research’s Office
Jessica Garcia (Co-Chair) - Computing and Information Services
Liz Malone - Swearer Center
Amanda Figgins - Department of Sociology
Eric Ferrara – Chemistry

We spent this year focusing on building a strong and positive reputation for SAC. The Outreach and Communications committee was instrumental in those efforts. Through recognizing staff, increasing our social media presence, redesigned promotional items, and a website revamp, the committee has worked tirelessly to make SAC a “household name” around Brown!

Listed below are some of the major initiatives of the Outreach and Communications Committee:

- **BrowniePoints: Stories Beyond Brown**
  
  BrowniePoints is an Employee Spotlight Program created to spotlight staff who positively impact the community in unique and meaningful ways or have a compelling story to share. Examples include hidden talents, community outreach, volunteering, good deeds etc. Each month, one nominee will be featured on the SAC homepage, the SAC Facebook page and our monthly newsletter. The program launched May 11th, and our first nominee was featured in June.

- **SAC Says**
  
  We sent out our first edition of our new monthly newsletter SAC Says the first week of July. The newsletter will feature our BrowniePoints nominee for the month, introduce SAC members, highlight upcoming events and volunteer opportunities and will also give us a chance to address staff issues and concerns. We are really looking forward to having the opportunity to outreach and communicate to staff on a monthly basis.
• **Increased Presence of Redesigned Publications**

We invested a significant amount of time in revamping our publications this year. We created a new brochure to explain SAC’s mission, goals, etc. to hand out at events such as BEAR Day and Staff Development Day. We also have created a longer lasting brochure that is not date specific to be given out to all new staff during new staff orientation. We are currently working on a promotional video to help with recruitment of new SAC members.

• **Website Revamp**

The SAC website needed some work and this year we made it a priority to update it. The homepage was redesigned to include a slideshow and dynamic links, as well as a Google calendar, and we revamped the news items page. Data indicate that the general number of visits has increased since revamping the web page and we think this is due both to it being easier to navigate and that we are continually linking it to any of our morning mails, emails, and Facebook posts.

• **Increased Social Media Presence (Primarily Facebook)**

We have increased the frequency of our Facebook posts and have begun to link our Facebook page to all advertisements and notifications. On average we are currently posting three to five times a week on a wide range of topics including but not limited to staff resources, SAC events, and volunteer opportunities. We have found that posts with photos or video get the most attention so we have made an effort to post many post-event photos. These efforts have resulted in an increased number of visits to the page and an increase in page likes providing us with another way of reaching out to staff. The image below shows the timeline for the increased number of page likes.
The Outreach and Communications Committee has been hard at work since January really thinking about strategies for improving our reputation on campus as well as our communication with staff. We have come up with many tangible ways to increase our transparency, outreach efforts, and modes of communication and we have already seen the benefits of those efforts. We hope to continue to improve and develop our outreach strategies in the coming months.
Staff Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report

Committee members:

Anthony Mam (Chair) - Brown Center for Students of Color
Chris Moore - Computing & Information Services
Rebecca Palmer - Watson Institute
Elizabeth Sanders - Facilities Management

The Mission Statement of the Diversity and Inclusion committee is to engage and educate Brown staff on topics and issues of diversity and inclusion. The committee hopes to accomplish this by creating spaces for underrepresented social identities and providing educational opportunities to Brown University staff. As the committee is newly established, we spent some time developing initiatives for the year. Listed below are ones we would like to highlight.

- **Staff Brown Bag Lunch Affinity Series**

  A major priority for the committee was creating an affinity space for staff of historically marginalized identities. The Brown Bag Lunch Affinity Series seeks to promote a community of interest among staff members from historically underrepresented groups (HUGs). It strives to build a supportive and affirming space for HUG staff at all levels without the weight of being an educator for their community, and to strengthen our professional and social relationships between diverse employees, the university, and the outside community. As of June 30, 2016, the committee implemented 3 Brown Bag Lunches for staff of color, LGBTQ staff, and women staff. The Brown Bag lunches were well received by those who attended. The committee has already planned another set of Brown Bag Lunches for the summer. Ideally, these brown bags will allow us to gain traction and to eventually create formal affinity spaces for HUG staff members at an institutional level.

- **BEARtalks**

  Additionally, the committee also wanted to engage all staff members in discussions on diversity and inclusion. To accomplish that, the committee is developing a program called BEARtalks, the Brown Education and Awareness Roundtable Talks (BEARtalks). BEARtalks provides an educational space for all Brown staff members to develop their awareness and knowledge with diversity and to engage them in discussions about approaches to create an inclusive work environment for all Brown community members. BEARtalks hopes to build a forum of discussion that combines both scholarly literature with current events, optimistically connecting theory into practice. The committee is planning on having its first BEARtalk in August.
• SAC Book Discussion

On August 23, 2016 the Diversity and Inclusion committee will facilitate a book discussion on the first-year common reading, My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor, to the members of the Staff Advisory Council, specifically because of the book’s themes of diversity and inclusion. The discussion will help engage the SAC committee members in an analysis of Sotomayor’s book, which will prepare them to assist in the conversation for the Staff Summer Reading occurring on August 26, 2016. Additionally, the committee will be creating points for discussion for the tables at lunch that will help guide the Summer Staff Reading conversation.

The Diversity and Inclusion committee has accomplished a lot this year, especially as a new SAC committee. We are very proud of the work we are doing in assisting Brown in its initiative to improve diversity and inclusion, especially for the staff at Brown. Our Brown Bags and BEARtalks are becoming great tools for the retention of marginalized staff at Brown and for engaging staff members in diversity conversations. We are very excited to continue our work in celebrating, educating, and advocating for all staff members at Brown and assisting in developing an inclusive Brown University community.
Volunteer Committee Report

Committee members:
Tracie Mederos - School of Professional Studies
Gilbert Fontes - Graphic Services
Stephanie Romano - Human Resources/Benefits
Katie Grasso - School of Professional Studies

The Volunteer Committee was tasked this year to organize volunteer opportunities for staff during off hours as well as to continue piloting volunteer service days for the Council. The committee has taken on providing service opportunities for staff, piloting a volunteer program, and creating a volunteer database. Please see more information on each of these below.

● Volunteer Opportunities for Staff

  Over the past 6 months, the committee has organized volunteer opportunities with the following organizations: Hasbro Children’s Hospital (Radiothon), American Liver Foundation (Life Liver Walk), Rhode Island Special Olympics and the Bristol 4th of July Committee (Annual 4th of July Parade). Opportunities are lined up in the summer months with the American Red Cross and Save the Bay. In addition, the committee secured 8 volunteer opportunities for Staff Development Day. Those opportunities were in partnership with: Providence Parks, Ronald McDonald House, Roger Williams Memorial Park, Save the Bay, Boys & Girls Club, Save the Bay, Tockwotton on the Waterfront: Senior Living, Southside Community Land Trust. The Committee also coordinated collections at the SDD breakfast and lunch for Books are Wings and the Fox Point Boys & Girls Club. Three bins of donations were delivered to each organization thanks to the generous staff we work with across campus.

● Volunteer Opportunity Database

  A Volunteer Opportunity Database (VOD) has been created to track existing and past partnerships with organizations. The goal is to ensure that partnerships are continued year after year after committee members have left. In addition, the database will also help the committee map out volunteer opportunities in advance. The VOD can also hopefully be used as a resource for SAC to identify organizations to suggest to departments looking to schedule a service opportunity for their staff.
• **Pilot Service Days and Recommendation for University Wide Service Days**

The Volunteer Committee is continuing to pilot service days with the Council participating in half to full day service projects. The Committee is working to schedule one per quarter. On April 15th, SAC visited the Roger Williams National Memorial in Providence to assist with sprucing up the park. Not only was the day a great team building opportunity for SAC, the Roger Williams staff were extremely pleased with the amount of work we were able to accomplish in just 3 hours. The next service opportunity for SAC members will be in late summer and in partnership with the Southside Community Land Trust. Based on these pilot days, the Volunteer Committee is ready to make the following recommendation for University Service Days,

*The Volunteer Committee proposes the following:*

➔ Departments will organize and take part in service opportunities as a team and the day will be twofold in that it will also serve as a team building opportunity.

➔ SAC will provide volunteer opportunities to departments by way of the VOD if needed but ultimately departments will need to find their own projects that work for them and their team.

➔ Time should be recorded as a service day in Workday.

➔ SAC will promote outcomes on SAC Facebook page, website etc.

➔ HR should manage the tracking, reporting and outreach to staff re: the new 'benefit'.

The Volunteer Committee has really enjoyed getting the chance to work with local organizations and the ability to provide service opportunities to staff. The SAC pilot days have served as great teambuilding activities while also giving back to the community. We would be glad to talk through this proposal in further detail at your convenience as we really hope that a plan can be solidified to allow all departments to have a day of service together.