

ON THE MOVE

Council on Staff Affairs Newsletter for VSU Staff

Spring 2003



COSA MISSION STATEMENT

1. Study Staff concerns.
2. Recommend to the President policies and procedures related to classified personnel.
3. Create a forum for two-way communication of ideas.
4. Develop a systematic means for communicating specific actions and feedback concerning all matters considered by COSA.
5. Facilitate the development of job and supervisory skills, compensation, benefits, and welfare of staff employees, classified and non-classified.

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WORKING TO SAVE

"In the March 5 campus-wide address, I outlined the fiscal challenges currently facing the state of Georgia, the University System, and VSU. Tough times call for creative measures, and I asked each of you to propose creative solutions to produce greater efficiencies across campus. I am impressed with your support and understanding and, especially, your responses.

On March 11, 12 and 13, budget unit heads participated in follow-up sessions to identify measures that will produce increased efficiencies for the campus. There were 163 independent responses, leading to general themes that emerged from all three sessions, including conserving energy, conserving paper through greater use of e-mail and electronic forms, and centralized purchasing of routine supplies such as paper. The savings we realize through such measures will be **redirected** to meet VSU's prioritized needs."

—**Ronald M. Zaccari**, *President's Message*, March 24, 2003

These are just a few of the ideas that have been suggested by employees as ways to save money on campus.

Copying/Printing

- Departments should plan ahead for their stationery orders. It is more cost effective to order more (i.e., Letterhead costs - \$53.29 for 500 sheets vs. \$64.92 for 1000 sheets).

- Print fewer copies of campus-wide documents for offices. For example, our office received one paper copy of all printed announcements per staff member. A single copy for each office which could be circulated among groups of five or less posted on a bulletin board would save substantial amounts.

- Should VSU discontinue the paper schedule of classes, campus directory, catalog, and handbooks? Offer ads to supplement the printing cost or provide on CD-Rom.

Mail

- Reduce daily campus mail delivery. This would save approximately \$700.00 annually on minor wear and tear and gas and less frequent

need for vehicle purchases.

- Encourage departments to plan their bulk mailings that qualify for the non-profit rate.

- Encourage departments to compare rates to see if the item they are shipping will qualify for cheaper rate.

Personnel

- Job sharing across units would improve efficiency and produce economies of labor. (i.e., have a programmer who works half-time for one area and half-time for another area.)

- Use student knowledge more. (Intern) (Provide recognition for those making special contributions.)

- Utilize the HUB concept and make efforts to identify onsite expertise to deliver professional development opportunities for employees.

- VSU early retirement option.

- Examine turnover rates of staff and analyze how the campus can best keep trained/experienced staff. It's

cheaper to keep good staff than to train new staff.

Supplies

- Require departments to use the standard supplies offered by the VSU Central Warehouse.

- Furniture (Check with surplus before ordering new furniture.) Establish a better system of tracking office furniture to save investment in new furniture.

- Check with VSU Warehouse before ordering new inter-department envelopes for large mailings. They generally can provide large quantities of used envelopes that will work just as well.

Technology

- Use Adobe Acrobat across campus to develop online forms with secure electronic signatures. This would allow a department to use one signature file for any type of request such as Stores, Printing, Travel authority, Student Activity pre-approval, etc.

—continued p. 2

FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings VSU Staff!

COSA is the avenue through which VSU staff employees participate in shared governance at Valdosta State. We strive to promote a positive and collaborative work environment by facilitating stronger communication with all staff members. COSA representatives genuinely care about YOU and commit to serving you with fortitude, pride and dedication.

I encourage you to join us in our current mission of being creative and working together to continue building the future of Valdosta State, even during what are considered trying times. We believe it is imperative for staff employees to realize that we play a significant role in the education process at Valdosta State University, even if we are not in the classroom. We can and do contribute a great deal to the learning that occurs outside of the classroom. We must continue being good stewards to those whom we serve to help support our futures!

If you have a question, concern, or especially a great idea that you would like to share, please do not hesitate to contact myself or one of the other representatives. We also welcome you to our monthly meetings, which are held the second Tuesday of the month at 8:30 in the President's Dining Room at Palms Dining Center.



Shannon McGee, COSA Chair & VSU 1 Card Services Programmer and Computer Specialist

Notice from the Interim Vice President for Business & Finance

We have been advised that Bank of America will institute a charge as of April 1, 2003 for check cashing for individuals not having an account with their institution. When brought to our attention, we contacted the appropriate parties and they have agreed to a six month waiver of this charge for VSU payroll checks only.

We will do all that is possible to make certain that the fee will not apply to University Employees; however, they have the authority to assess such fees regardless of the fact that they are our payroll clearinghouse.

Hopefully, we will be able to work this matter out to everyone's satisfaction.

Please visit COSA's Website:

www.valdosta.edu/vsu/cosa

Working to Save continued from p. 1

- Turn off computers at the end of the day or for long periods of time.
- Ensure that comprehensive policy, procedure and practices for each department/unit are available on the Web in printable format for reference and review.

Utilities

- Conservation...remember to turn off the lights!
- Turn down the thermostat by 5 degrees across campus.

Other Efficiencies

- Recycle. Efforts are being made to continue the recycling on campus. (paper and soft drink cans)
- Commencement-Have one ceremony in the fall and one ceremony in the spring and eliminate the summer ceremony.
 - Produce physical copies of practices and procedures – a comprehensive policy manual in every office on paper would standardize and streamline campus efforts.
 - Reward departments that raise grant money to supplement their budgets.
 - Address issues on levels of signature.
 - Eliminate the multiple approvals for requests to Printing, Stores, and Purchasing. If needed, have a policy of additional approvals based on the dollar amount of the request.

▲ Right to Know Training

The VSU Environmental Health & Safety Department along with the Board of Regents in Atlanta, Ga., wish to remind ALL faculty and staff to complete the required annual online refresher course for the Right To Know Training program. This program is designed to educate USG employees on the importance and benefits of properly recognizing and safely working with hazardous materials. Please encourage everyone in your work area to complete this training within the next two weeks, as it only takes a few minutes.

The website address for online training is:
www.usg.edu/ehs/training/

On the first screen under TRAINING & RESOURCES, click on: BASIC AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAM and follow instructions.

On the last page, fill out the information with name, dept, etc., and submit. It will automatically send me a confirmation when you have finished the training.

Please call me if you have any questions and I will be glad to assist.

Georgia G. Heruska
Occupational Health & Safety Officer
Phone 333-7832
Room 1096 Biology/Chemistry Building

**Don't Forget
Retirement Luncheon • June 12**

COSA SPOTLIGHTS



Bob Lee

As one of the charter members of COSA, Sgt. Bob Lee is dedicated to helping

address staff concerns, encouraging job development and promoting the general welfare of staff employees.

"I enjoy my job and COSA. I would like to think when I leave that I have helped to make someone else's tenure here a little easier than mine," Lee says.

The 19-year veteran of the public safety office was elected to COSA in its infancy and campaigned to return to the committee two years ago. He is now going into his third year of service.

Lee has seen many changes over the course of his career

at Valdosta State University and is enthusiastic about what is to come.

"I am excited about changes that have been made the last couple of years and feel that Valdosta State University is destined to become one of the premiere institutions of learning in the country," Lee says.

It was Lee's wife, Jeniene, who first drew him to Valdosta. Lee says his wife and kids took a trip to Florida in 1982. They spent a night in Valdosta and fell in love with the place. That same year, she accepted a teaching position

at W.G. Nunn Elementary School. Later Lee accepted a position as an officer with Valdosta State College.

Prior to coming to Valdosta State, Lee was a corrections officer who primarily worked with criminally insane inmates. He worked in several prisons throughout New York. Before that Lee served as a narcotics correction officer.

He was born and raised in the mid Hudson Valley of New York State. Lee and his wife have four children; Lorraine, 37; Katherine, 29; Frank, 25 and Faith-Anne, 13.

Retirement Notes

Good news. The Teachers Retirement System Board of Trustees at its February meeting made a significant change in the way the Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) will be handled from this point forward. Those retiring January 1–June 1 will be eligible for their first COLA in the following January. Previously, you had to retire prior to March 1 to be eligible in January. Those retiring July 1–December 1 will receive their first COLA the following July 1. COLAs are 1½ % semiannually and are compounded. This is good news for those retiring June 1 or before as your income will now be increased in January.

Retirement Processing

All Teachers Retirement Members who are planning a July 2003 retirement are encouraged to submit their paperwork as soon as is possible. In order to receive your first check in a timely manner, July 1 retirees should have their materials completed and forwarded no later than April 30.

Online and videotape resources for Dr. Zaccari's budget presentation

For anyone who was unable to attend Dr. Zaccari's budget presentation on March 5, 2003, there will be videotapes and handout material available for checkout from the Odum Library reserve section (ext. 5869) and the Training and Development resource library (ext. 5105).

The presentation is also available online at:

www.valdosta.edu/satellite/vsubudget/mar05.html

The web page has a link to print the graphics used in the presentation which are not readable on the video.

Patrick Smith

Patrick Smith is a native of Thomas County and U.S. Marine Corps veteran. Smith has been at Valdosta State University for eight years as a renovation and construction electrician and enjoys being active with COSA and the University Planning Advisory Council. He is also attending classes at VSU, majoring in Philosophy.

"I see VSU as being poised on the brink of something big and believe we can be a gem in the southeast. I love meeting new people in our campus community and try to say hello to everyone I meet. I plan to continue serving my co-workers and encourage feedback."

Smith may be reached on campus via email plsmith@valdosta.edu or calling Plant Operations.



COSA On The Move Meeting

The next COSA On The Move meeting will be on Thursday, April 10, 2003 from 11AM– 2PM at the University Center in Magnolia Room 1. This COSA on the Move will be a little different from the meetings in the past, this one will be a "Meet Your Rep" meeting. All employees are invited to come out and meet their representative and discuss anything that their little heart desires. Please mark you calendars. I do understand that you may not be able to stay the entire time, but please try to make a few minutes to attend. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

EMPLOYEE OF THE SEMESTER

RONALD C. BUTLER

The employee of the semester for Fall 2002 is Ronald C. Butler, central warehouse shipping and receiving supervisor.

Ronald (Ron to his friends) was born in Newark, N.J. and was raised in a small town 15 miles south of Newark named Rahway, N.J. Upon graduating High School in 1981 Ron entered the United States Air Force and attended basic training in San Antonio, Tex. After completing basic training his first duty assignment was to England for the first of two tours in the United Kingdom. He was also stationed in Louisiana, Alaska, New Jersey and he ended his military career retiring in 2001 at Moody AFB. Upon retirement, after a three-month vacation, Ron applied for his current position as shipping and receiving supervisor in the Central Warehouse. He was hired in September of 2001 and has been enjoying his time at Valdosta State University. Ron met his wife the former Wendy Erskine (a current VSU student) while stationed in New Jersey and were married in 1991. The couple have two daughters Tameka, 10, and Shelby, 8, and they are expecting their third child in August.



"I enjoy working with Ron Butler because he has a great personality and great smile. Always ready to help other Warehouse team members with any project and go the extra mile for any person across campus. Ron brings a high level of professionalism to the workplace. His willingness to share his vast knowledge and experience with others in order to help them grow in their jobs comes as second nature to him. He is a perfect example of a team player and exemplifies what others should strive for in the workplace at Valdosta State: Trust, Respect, Consideration and Communication."

—Lene Collins, Central Warehouse

Each employee of the semester receives a framed certificate, a parking pass that gives access to any parking space on campus other than handicapped, and \$100 from the Office of the President. The employee of the semester is a very important part of COSA. COSA takes great pride in this honor because it recognizes the hard work and dedication of our employees here at VSU.

INTERESTED IN COSA?

If you are, please submit your name and contact information to Mike McKinley — Election Committee at 249-4989 or e-mail mmckinle@valdosta.edu.

ELECTION NEWS

There are currently 6 slots open for election. These are:

- 1) Secretary/Clerical
- 1) Professional/Non-Faculty
- 2) Service Maintenance
- 2) Business & Finance

The nominations forms will be sent out during the week of the May 19, 2003. Everyone in these areas who is eligible to vote will be sent a nomination form. The names from the nomination forms will be moved to the voting ballots. Voting will take place on-line at COSA's Website www.valdosta.edu/vsu/cosa/ on Monday, June 2-6, 2003 and by polling station Friday, June 6, 2003. The Election Committee is excited about this year's election, since the process is being transitioned to a more streamlined process. If you have any suggestions, comments, or questions, please contact your COSA Election Committee. Your Election Committee members are Sammy Dees— Admissions (333-5791), and Mike McKinley— Cooperative Education (333-7172).

TUITION REMISSION DATES

The following dates for having your approved Tuition Remission Forms to Human Resources have been established. This is pretty much the same schedule as last year.

Employees taking course work under the TRR program are reminded to list alternative classes on your list of approved courses in the event you are unable to register for a preferred class.

If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Inman Grimsley.

Summer 2003:

Maymester

Forms Due: 4/11/03
Registration: 5/14/03

All other Summer Sessions

Forms Due: 5/9/03
Registration: 6/10/03 after 5PM

Fall 2003:

Forms Due: 7/18/03
Registration: 8/15/03 after 3PM