



Parents Advisory Council Spring Meeting

October 15, 2017

Minutes

Members Present: Anthony Fox, Alison Phelan, Chuck Kaufman, Jennifer Getchell, JoAnn Roselli, Leslie Mitchell, Melissa Goldman, Mercel Meredith Ault, Michael Burk, Mimi Mumm, Neena Verma, Ninette Marzouki, Pam Meoli, Patricia (Penny) Nichols-Cordero, Peter Lee, Seena Franklin, Shannon Cullagh, Terry Budebo,

Members Absent: Ginger Merritt, S. Abbitt' Thomas, Peggy Schmidt

Staff Present: Jeanne Horrigan, Rose Boulay

Featured Speakers:

Michelle Banks, Education and Training Voucher Coordinator and Adolescent Program Supervisor, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

Enobong Anna Branch H. Branch, Ph. D., Associate Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion, Chancellor's Office

New Member Welcome

The meeting began at 10:00am with Neena Verma and Melissa Goldman presiding. Jeanne Horrigan welcomed new members and asked all members to introduce themselves by stating who they are and why they joined the Council.

Family Weekend Update

Jeanne thanked everyone for attending Family Weekend. She was very pleased with the program and preliminary numbers.

23 parents volunteered for the weekend which brings the total of volunteers for the year to 71.

The food drive was also very successful; donations filled 4 "Move-In" bins. Jeanne then read a thank you note from Wilma Crespo, Co-Director of Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success (CMASS) regarding the gift card donations which were distributed this year to incoming Foster Care students and which were accepted graciously. To date \$3,530 from 56 families was raised and 10 Foster Care students received these gift card donations.

Jeanne asked members to email any feedback from the weekend to Jeanne at jhorrigan@umass.edu.

Election of Officers

Neena, the Chair, asked if anyone would backup Alison when she can't take the minutes. Penny agreed to serve as backup secretary.

Melissa, the Chair-elect, thanked the original founding members and encouraged members to run for the Chair-elect post so that she will be able to mentor that person starting January as this is a group that's evolving, and looking for sustainability.

Rose explained the positions. Neena explained the time commitment. Leslie agreed to become the Chair-elect. The Council voted to accept Leslie as the Chair-elect starting May 2018. For the time being, Leslie will shadow Melissa and Neena to learn the ropes of her new position.

Committee Goals/Plans for 2017-18 Academic Year

Note of Clarification: The Social Media component of the Council is currently a group but not a standing committee according to the bylaws. The Council will vote to make it a standing committee in March.

Community Service/Outreach – Mimi reported on the Community Service/Outreach's goals. The goals are listed below:

- *Advisory members will* know the extent of food insecurity on the UMass Amherst campus, who the problem impacts and the level of that impact.
- Expand opportunities for raising funds for the Foster Care Initiative to include options for monetary, tax deductible contributions.
- Have a seamless connection with staff from DCF to support and augment the work they do with youth from foster care.
- Create a mentor list from parent volunteers to share with Michelle Banks (DCF), Kelly Grey and Wilma Crespo in order to provide support and guidance to youths from Foster Care.
- Increase the number of non-council volunteers who volunteer at events.
- Gain directions from Rose Boulay on how we can be helpful in growing the volunteer bank.
- Explore how we can be helpful to international students and families of international students.
- Strengthen marketing strategy for Foster Care initiative.

Wellness – Pam spoke on behalf of Ginger Merritt the chair of the Wellness committee

Some activities they would like to work on include a spring activity (such as goat yoga; aerobics, spin or step classes). Another idea was to expand on the Dare to be Aware session at Family Weekend.

Special Events – Alison did not have anything to report at this time.

Featured Speaker – Mike Burk introduced Michelle Banks, Education and Training Voucher Coordinator and Adolescent Program Supervisor, from Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. Ms. Banks explained the Foster Care program and initiatives available for college age students. All the information is detailed on their website:

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-department-of-children-families>

A discussion on what the Parent Advisory Council could help out followed afterwards. Ms. Banks suggested: 1) We provide the DCF link via the Facebook group; 2) Stay connected to DCF; 3) Continue to fundraise the gift card idea plus other initiatives as “donation of Dining guest swipes”. Jeanne would also like to work with DCF to help coordinate students’ transportation to New Students Orientation.

Discussion Items

Changes to the Bylaws – Create a social media committee for the Facebook group and Fam2Fam blog. Decision will be made in March.

Council Goals – Draft general Council goals.

Business Cards – Rose produced two versions, they will be emailed to members for approval. We will go with the majority.

Featured Speaker – Jeanne Horrigan introduced Enobong Anna Branch H. Branch, Ph.D., Associate Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion, Chancellor’s Office. Dr. Branch talked about the climate survey which UMass administered last spring and the new diversity campaign “Hate has no home” at UMass Amherst which was launched last fall. OPS will generate a diversity training module for Council Members. Anna stated that she would be happy to work with OPS to get some Talking Points to members.

Important Dates

Winter NSO Volunteering: December 13, January 16-19 – 8:00 am-9:30 am, Campus Center Auditorium—Rose is looking for members to volunteer. She will send a sign-up sheet a month in advance.

Co-Chair Conference Calls: October 24 and November 21, 5:00 pm

Group Conference Calls: November 1 and December 6, 5:30 pm -- Rose explained the procedure to the new members on how dates are decided and how calls are handled.

Winter Move-in Meeting: January 21, 2018, Time and Location TBA. We will decide on the time at the next group conference call.

Spring Meeting – March 18, 12:00 – 2:30 pm, Location TBA

Campus Update

UMass Amherst Ranked among Top 30 National Public Universities by U.S. News & World Report

For Seventh Consecutive Year, UMass Amherst Named a Top LGBTQ-Friendly Campus
Campus Ranked Fourth Safest in U.S.

More updates available at <https://www.umass.edu/newsoffice/>

Meeting adjourned at 12:43pm.

Alison Phelan, recording secretary