

Remarks to the Board of Trust

From Alfred Brady, University Staff Advisory Council President

2016-2017

April 20, 2017

Members of the Board of Trust, Vanderbilt Administrators and Distinguished Guests, I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to address you today. My name is Alfred Brady I work in the Special Education department at Peabody as the admission coordinator. I am honored to represent the Staff as the University Staff Advisory Council President. It has been my honor to serve on USAC for the past six years.

The University Staff Advisory Council represents all employees outside of the medical center who are in non-faculty, non-union positions. We are made up of more than **100 elected individuals**, chosen **by 20 campus groups**. Our members include hourly employees to professionals, administrators, and technical specialists. More than 4,000 staff are represented.

USAC's primary motivation is to strengthen the experience of staff at Vanderbilt, and our activities all aim to support this charge. We do this by serving as a sounding board, supporting communication efforts between staff and administration, and by creating opportunities to engage in service to the greater Vanderbilt community.

This year our goal has been to serve as a conduit that connects staff members from their desk to the pulse of what is happening within the Vanderbilt community.

I would like to share with you a few highlights from this council year:

We begin our year with our established practice of polling university staff to determine if there are new issues of interest or concern. We normally conduct our poll twice a year.

One large effort that has come from our staff poll is our CARE committee. This committee is made up of members of USAC, MCSAC, Faculty Senate, and HR who work together to pick topics of concern we hear most about from staff. CARE stands for Civility, Appreciation, and Respectful Environments. This year's spring presentation was titled "Educate and Empower yourself to respect our differences in your work environment." The speakers were Sandra Barnes Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion along with VUMC Director of the Office of Inclusion and Health Equity (OIHE), Dr. Arie Nettles.

A second effort that come from our staff poll was the staffs concern about parking and transportation. Many staff members have personally felt the growth that is currently happening within Nashville. This lead to USAC playing an active role in sharing staff member opinions in the Future VU initiative.

We have continued our support of the Employee Hardship Fund, through the Kroger card program. With this program we are able to support staff members who are facing a financial need, simply by linking and have other staff members link their Kroger Plus card to Vanderbilt as their preferred organization. We are so excited for the continued success and growth of this program. Through this effort we have raised **\$5,952.67 and counting**.

USAC also looked to be a supportive resource to staff members during the monumental separation of the University and medical center. And now we work to play the same role in supporting staff members through the Project SkyVU launch.

USAC continues to be an active supporter of the university's initiatives on diversity, inclusion and equity. At our February meeting, we invited staff members to the presentation by Vice Chancellor George C. Hill. Also in our spring bi-annual poll we partnered with the EDI office to obtain feedback from staff members about mental health services available on campus.

In closing, Vanderbilt is an exceptional institution. It is unique in Tennessee and can only be compared to a handful of universities across the country. Vanderbilt's reputation as an outstanding and progressive employer has attracted and retained some of the most talented employees this nation has to offer. The staff council has had a landmark year. In the upcoming year, the University Staff Advisory Council plans to continue to be a vibrant resource and voice to the staff members across the campus.

Thank you for your time.