

Exempt Staff Council Minutes
Tuesday, October 25, 2016 – 2:30pm
Frieson Black Cultural Center, Multipurpose Room

P.J. Snodgrass, ESC Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker.

1. Business

- Guest speaker:

- Dr. Nissa Dahlin-Brown, Associate Director of the Baker Center for Public Policy

Dr. Dahlin-Brown thanked the group for the opportunity to share information about the Baker Center for Public Policy. The center is named for Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. who represented Tennessee well and held such roles as Vice Chairman of the Senate Watergate Committee, Ronald Reagan's Chief of Staff, and Ambassador to Japan over his long career in politics.

For the best information about the Baker Center employees can visit bakercenter.utk.edu for more information including events, current research, and student engagement. There are many opportunities for students to become involved at the Baker Center. The Baker Scholars program gives students the opportunity to conduct research or propose practical solutions to real-life public policy issues and initiatives. The Baker Ambassadors help in the creation and management of special events in connection with the center providing hands-on experience. There are other opportunities including the Baker Center Living Learning Community, a minor in Public Policy Analytics, and a master in Public Policy and Administration.

There are several faculty and research members who participate in the Baker Center's work. Topics from environmental protection to economic development and everything in between. These areas are condensed into three main areas of focus: Global Security Program; Leadership & Governance; and Energy & Environmental Policy Program. Publications and other research information are available at the Baker Center website for review.

There are many events and lectures held at the Baker Center to bring world-class experts to the University of Tennessee. Recently the former Foreign Minister of Poland was the Ashe Lecture discussing the US Role in Today's Europe. Top tier faculty, researchers, and policy makers visit each year to provide an opportunity for UT Knoxville to hear from and learn from these influencers. For more information about these events visit <http://bakercenter.utk.edu/events/> or <http://bakercenter.utk.edu/events-and-news/>.

Dr. Dahlin-Brown shared that early voting is taking place at the Baker Center this year. From October 31st to November 3rd Knox County registered voters can cast their ballots at the Baker Center. On election day, only those assigned to the Baker Center as a polling place will be able to vote there. This polling place was created to give campus citizens a convenient place to vote.

Dr. Dahlin-Brown encouraged anyone with questions to contact her at 974-8681 or nissa@utk.edu. She thanked the group for the opportunity to share information about the purpose and work of the Baker Center.

- External Commission Reports

- Campus Planning – LaShel Brown
- Commission for Blacks— Lisa Byrd (OIT)
- Commission for Women—Teresa Fisher
- LGBT Commission—Eric Carr

Eric Carr shared a letter that was created by the Commission and addressed to several members of the UT Knoxville Administration (see attached).

- Faculty Senate—Tiffany Harmon
- Work Culture Improvements- Brian Browning

- Issues/Questions from constituents

- Is there a UT policy or any guidelines in dealing with a UT employee that's operating in a supervisory role who appears to be suffering from health or mental issues which seems to be effecting their ability to carry out their job?

They used to say these supervisory jobs are not lifetime appointments.

Dr. Mary Lucal, Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, shared that there are resources for all employees who may be going through a difficult time or situation. The Employee Assistance Program is available to all employees through the state's insurance plan. This resource is confidential and is carried out by a third party company, Magellan. Up to five free counseling sessions are available to employees and their dependents through this resource. Employees can call 855-437-3486 or visit Here4TN.com. There is also the CARE Line which Julie Roe, Employee Relations Counselor, will be addressing next month with this group. This resource allows for trained staff from Human Resources and other areas of campus to respond to concerns employees might have about their coworkers. Employee Relations can always be contacted if there are issues in the department which may need to be addressed or if the employee would like guidance in how to address concerns themselves. Dr. Lucal cautioned about the use of language such as "supervisory jobs are not lifetime appointments." There are more constructive ways to address concerns about a work situation.

- This may have been covered in the last meeting, but I have a question about the changes from exempt to non-exempt. I have read several places about the option of staff who will be transferred to non-exempt to stay on the monthly pay verses bi-weekly. Has there been any official announcement or procedure we need to complete to stay on monthly or switch to bi-weekly pay and time reporting starting December 1?

Dr. Lucal shared that there will be training sessions for affected employees and their supervisors in November. There will also be open session training sessions to address this question and others related to how non-exempt status changes the workday and workweek. The FLSA changes are affective December 1st. The threshold for exempt status will be increasing from

approximately \$23,000 to \$47, 460. This will affect many employees at UT Knoxville and across the UT System.

2. Future Business

November 2016 guest – Julie Roe, Employee Relations Counselor
946-CARE Resource

3. ESC Committee meetings

- Nominating/Orientation
- Communications/Website
- Advocacy/Education

4. Next Meeting – November 22, 8th floor Andy Holt Conference Room

TO: Dr. Joe DiPietro, President, University of Tennessee
Dr. Jimmy Cheek, Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Dr. John Zomchick, Interim Provost, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Dr. Vincent Carilli, Vice Chancellor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Dr. Melissa Shivers, Dean of Students, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

FROM: The Commission for LGBT People

DATE: October 21, 2016

SUBJECT: Vandalism of the UTK Pride Center

Given the repeated acts of vandalism directed toward UTK's Pride Center, the Commission for LGBT People respectfully requests that university leadership gives due attention to LGBT discrimination on campus. While UTK has made some strides in addressing LGBT issues over the past few years, there is much work to be done - starting with a public statement from the administration condemning these acts of hatred and violence toward LGBT people.

A brief summary of recent acts of vandalism is included below - this list does not include recent acts of targeted violence towards LGBT students on campus.

- October 2014 – Pride flag is torn down; two additional Pride flags are stolen during this month
- September 2015 – Pride Center sidewalk sign is broken
- January 2016 – Pride Center window is broken
- April 2016 – Pride Center sidewalk sign is put in the trash
- July 2016 – “LGBT” is scratched out on university signage
- September 2016 – Pride flag is torn; note stating, “Fags get AIDS more often” is taped to the Pride Center door
- October 2016 – Pride flag is torn down

As members of UTK's LGBT community, the LGBT Commission strives to make this campus more inclusive and welcoming. However, the administration's overwhelming lack of public support toward the LGBT community at UTK makes it impossible to create impactful and lasting advances in this area. This issue has become magnified as we have yet to hear a strong and clear message from leadership condemning the continued acts of vandalism of the UTK Pride Center.

These continued acts of vandalism are not random acts of vandalism and they should not be treated as such. These offenses are committed for the sole purpose of communicating threat, hate, disdain, violence, damage, and hostility to any people who may be served by or associated with the Pride Center; students, staff, and faculty who make up the University of Tennessee, and who also identify as LGBT.

If the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus is to truly be *welcoming to all and hostile to none*, it must be inclusive, prohibit discrimination and harassment of LGBT individuals, and protect safe spaces that exist for LGBT students, faculty, and staff. To that end, we respectfully request that our administration make a clear statement promoting diversity, tolerance, and inclusion while taking a clear stand against the homophobia and bullying that has become so prevalent on our campus.

Respectfully,
The Commission for LGBT People