



## President's Corner

by Deb Charles

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday break! It's hard to believe we have started the spring semester. In today's newsletter, you can find information on the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund. If you have a child who attends Clemson, be sure to check out how he or she can apply for the scholarship. Each year, ten children of CU staff members are awarded a scholarship.

Work on the Homecoming Habitat House continues at the house site in Central. If you are interested in helping, please contact Karon Donald ([karond@clemson.edu](mailto:karond@clemson.edu)) in the Staff Senate office.

As always, if you have any concerns or ideas relating to staff that you would like for Staff Senate to consider, please feel free to contact me at [debm@clemson.edu](mailto:debm@clemson.edu).

*Go Tigers!  
Deb*

## Staff Senate Meeting Summary

Jan. 10, 2012

**Special Order of the Day – Dan Hofmann, director of parking and transportation services:** Hofmann, who started at Clemson in September, introduced himself and talked about some new initiatives he is putting into place to help ease congestion on campus and be more sustainable.

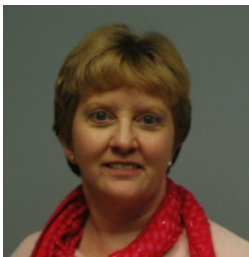
One such initiative, launching this semester, is the car-sharing program WeCar. Faculty, staff and students can register for the service for a \$25 fee and will have four cars available in locations around campus to rent by the hour or day. The rental fee is \$7.50/hour. The goal is to offer people an alternative to bringing their own car to campus. Hofmann said he hopes the program will appeal to students so there will be fewer student cars on campus. The program will also provide a convenient way for faculty and staff to drive to meetings and other events on or off campus. For more information, visit <http://www.wecar.com/clemson>. Clemson is the first college or university in South Carolina to use WeCar.

Other new initiatives include ZimRide, an on-line program run through Facebook that allows people to find carpools; expanding the existing carpool permit program; and offering rewards for people who drive low-emission vehicles to campus.

Hofmann is also planning to revamp visitor parking policies. He plans to eliminate the current system, which requires visitors to get a permit to park on campus. He also plans to convert all visitor parking and timed parking spaces to metered parking spaces that would be available to visitors as well as people with regular permits. He also has been working with campus planners to create better signage to direct people to parking lots.

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## Julia Lusk: New Vice President



Staff Senate held a special election in January to elect a new vice president to fulfill the term of Jonathan Wylie (Student Affairs), who resigned from the position. Wylie has plans to move to China later this year to teach English, and could not carry out the rest of his term.

Julia Lusk, who represents the Provost's budget center, was elected to fill the remainder of Wylie's term. Lusk will serve as vice president through April, at which time she will be installed as the next president of Staff Senate.

Lusk is an academic adviser in the office of undergraduate studies. She has worked at Clemson for 12 years and is serving her third term in Staff Senate. Lusk also serves as president of the South Carolina State Employees Association, a position she has held since 2003. Lusk graduated from Clemson, with a bachelor's degree in speech and communications and a master's in human resource development.

## Staff Senator Spotlight

**TINA WHITE**

Director/producer, Video Production Services

**What one thing would you like people to know about you?**

I am a pretty simple girl. I love my family, work hard and cheer loudly for all things Clemson. Oh, and I like to cook too.

**If you could take your dream vacation, where would it be?**

My dream vacation would be Australia.

**Describe yourself using any of the letters**

**C, L, E, M, S, O, N.**

C-Certifiable Crazy for my Tigers!

**Why did you choose to work at Clemson University?**

This is my dream job. I have been in the television business for over 15 years and a Clemson fan my whole life. I loved what I was doing for a career and the thought of combining that with a place I loved was a no brainer. My enjoyment comes from the fact that I can share with the world how amazing this University is. I always appreciated it as an athletic fan but now I appreciate it even more because of the wonderful work that is done by so many amazing people here to improve all areas of our community, state, and nation. Clemson is truly special and that is a secret that does not need to be kept quiet.

**How long have you worked here?**

5 years

## Apply for the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund

Do you have a child enrolled at Clemson or applying to attend in the fall? He or she may be eligible for a Staff Senate Scholarship!

Entering freshman who want to apply must complete the admission process by March 1. To be considered for a need-based scholarship, students must submit FASFA by Feb. 1. Students who are already enrolled at Clemson must submit an application letter for the scholarship by March 1.

For more information on eligibility, deadlines and how to apply, visit <http://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/staff-senate/scholarships.html>.

## Hopes and Expectations in the New Year

by Staff Ombudsman Tom Ward

Each new year provides us with an opportunity to review and evaluate the relationship between our hopes and expectations, and our actual experience. For some, 2011 couldn't wrap up quickly enough. For others, it was a positive and significant year.

As we think over the past year, and look ahead to the coming year, there is wisdom in looking at how much stock do we put in the power we assign to external circumstances and influences versus our own decision-making. Is our experience dictated by our own perception that circumstances are beyond our control? Or, is our perception that our experience is driven by the choices we make in relation to those external circumstances and influences? We not only have the power to make decisions about what direction(s) we will go, but also about how we will respond to the inevitable challenges that come our way – many of which may not be our preference and may be beyond our control. Organizational changes, budgetary pressures, interpersonal conflicts – the list goes on.

So, maybe the beginning of a new year provides an opportunity for each of us to reflect on our ways of thinking, to embrace the power of our own decision making and to decide what kind of impact we want to have in our circles of influence. Choosing to believe the best in people. Choosing to be positive. Choosing to go above and beyond even when there is no reward to do so - because it's the right thing to do. This does not mean we must be naïve "Pollyanna's," not acknowledging the complexity of the challenges we encounter, only that we have the ability to choose our course(s) and to decide how much we will allow things outside of us dictate the inside of us.

*"choices, not chance, determines one's destiny."  
- Anonymous*



Staff members Dory Kidd (front) and Penny Hall (back), both of the Conference Center & Inn, work at the Faculty and Staff Senate Habitat House. The next work day for faculty and staff is Saturday, Jan. 28. To get involved, contact Karon Donald at [karond@clemson.edu](mailto:karond@clemson.edu) or 656-9000.

# Legislative Update

## PROPOSED CHANGES TO STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The House Ways & Means Committee has issued its list of recommended changes to the South Carolina State Retirement System. The list has not been voted on by the General Assembly, and the Senate has yet to issue its list of recommendations, but Staff Senate felt it was important to keep university employees informed of this important issue.

Some of the recommendations include:

- Raising the retirement age to 62 and the number of years of service required to 30 for an employee to receive full retirement benefits.
- Increasing the employee contribution to the system by one percent AND increasing the employer contribution by one percent.
- Sick leave will no longer be used to add additional service credit. Annual leave will no longer be added to the final average compensation.
- No longer offer TERI to new employees.

For a full list of the committee's recommendations, visit <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/Ways&MeansRetirementAdHocStudyCommittee/Ad%20Hoc%20com%20Proposed%20Changes%20December%202011.pdf>.

If you would like to contact your legislators about the proposed changes, you can look up your legislator at <http://sc.gov/HowDoI/Pages/FindMyLegislator.aspx>.

Clemson University policy states that university employees may not use Clemson University or state resources to contact their legislators. This includes using Clemson computers, phone lines, letterhead or email addresses. Legislators must be contacted during an employee's personal time away from work.

## HR Update: Meet John Mueller

Human resources has hired John Mueller as its new director of customer service. Mueller has more than 16 years of public higher education human resources experience, most recently serving as executive director of human resources at the College of Southern Nevada from 2007 to 2011.

"The initial responsibility of the director of customer service will be to develop and implement a one-stop experience for university employees to receive the service they deserve," said Michelle Piekutowski, interim chief human resources officer.

Prior to his position at the College of Southern Nevada, Mueller held various human resources positions at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) for more than 11 years, which included director and manager-level positions.

Mueller holds a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in hotel administration from UNLV. He is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources by the HR Certification Institute. He is a member of several human resources professional organizations, including the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources and the Society for Human Resource Management, and is a former board member of the Southern Nevada Industry Liaison Group.

"Clemson advertised nationally for this position, and we are very excited to have John on board," said Piekutowski. "His commitment to customers and extensive leadership background in human resources will provide an extreme value to the employees of Clemson University."



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This newsletter is published monthly for all Clemson University employees. Reader comments, questions and suggestions are always welcome!

## Staff Senate Meeting Summary

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### President's Reports:

**Board of Trustees:** The next quarterly meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Feb. 1-2 in Columbia. President Deb Charles (CCIT) will deliver a report.

**Human Resources:** John Mueller, new customer service director for human resources, introduced himself to the senate. Mueller's role is to establish a new customer service center within human resources that will provide employees with an efficient one-stop shop for all their needs.

**Legislative Update:** Sen. Rose Ellen Davis-Gross (past-president) reported that the state legislature is in session. Legislators are reviewing many proposed changes to the state retirement system, which include raising the employee contribution to 7.5 percent, raising the retirement age to 62 and raising the number of years of service required to 30. For details on the proposed changes, visit <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/Ways&MeansRetirementAdHocStudyCommittee/Ad%20Hoc%20>

[com%20Proposed%20Changes%20December%202011.pdf](#).

### Standing Senate Committee Reports:

**Membership:** Vice President/President-Elect Jonathan Wylie (Student Affairs) has tendered his resignation from the position, as he plans to move this summer to China with his family to teach English there. A special election was held to fulfill the remainder of his term. Two candidates ran for the position: Sen. Julia Lusk (Provost) and Sen. Angela Nixon (Advancement). Lusk won the election and will start service immediately as vice president/president-elect. She will remain in the position until April, when she will be installed as president. The regular election for the next vice president/president-elect will held in March. Congratulations to Julia!

**Policy & Welfare:** Sen. Tim Drake (PSA) reported that the committee is looking at the policies surrounding free course hours available to university employees. University employees are able to take up to six hours of classes per semester for free, but many staff members have reported difficulty in taking advantage of this benefit. Drake said the committee

is going to look at clarifying some points in the policy and raising awareness of this benefit for staff. Admissions director Robert Barkley has offered to work with the committee to help people with enrollment and registration.

### Old Business:

**Habitat for Humanity update:** The next work days at the house are Jan. 14 and Jan. 28. Sen. Lusk will be emailing her list to ask for volunteers for the day. If you are interested in participating, contact her at [mcbride@clemsun.edu](mailto:mcbride@clemsun.edu). Lusk reported that the Pickens County Habitat chapter has purchased a vacant grocery store in Easley to open a Habitat Re-Store. Volunteers are currently needed to help clean up and ready the space for opening, and volunteers will be needed in the future to operate the store.

### Next meeting:

**Tuesday, Feb. 14, 10:30 a.m., Madren Center. Visitors always welcome!**

## A Look Back at 2011

2011 was an exciting year for Staff Senate with a lot of accomplishments to be proud of. Here's a list of the top five:

**1. Staff Development Program's first graduating class:** 2011 saw the first group of 25 staff members graduate from the Staff Development Program. These dedicated staff members completed 150 hours each of personal and professional development and university and community service. Another class of 25 participants began the program in the spring.

**2. An Evening at Woodburn:** In April 2011, Staff Senate hosted "An Evening at Woodburn" to raise funds for the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund. The event featured food, live music and prize drawings and was a great success!

**3. Payroll deductions increased:** A record number of employees signed up for payroll deduction to donate money to

the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund at this year's Benefits Fair. More than 100 employees agreed to donate at least \$1 per paycheck to benefit the fund, which means more than \$3,000 annually could be donated. Thanks to all donors!

**4. Community service projects:** For the first time, Staff Senate has partnered with Faculty Senate to build a Habitat for Humanity House. Volunteers have worked many hours already to help complete the house that was started on Bowman Field as part of Homecoming. Work will continue through the spring semester to finish the project. Staff Senate also held its annual food drive to benefit Golden Harvest Food Bank. The drive brought in 985 pounds of food!

**5. New scholarship recipients:** 10 Clemson students who are the children of university staff members received scholarships from the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund this year. Congrats to all scholarship recipients!