2014 in Review by Cailean Leith

The past year brought the Washington College community quite a bit of change. We've said goodbye to many and welcomed new employees. We've seen employees shift positions on campus and watched as others have been promoted to new responsibilities. Probably the biggest change to our campus was that we said goodbye to our President during 2014. While that puts us in a time of transition, our interim President Jay Griswold, and all of our faculty and staff have been working to ensure that the college stayed business as usual.

In the past year the Staff Council has worked extremely hard to make sure that the voice of our employees has been heard. One of the biggest concerns we've always heard was that a lack of communication existed on the campus. As a result, the Staff Council began publishing the monthly newsletter. While I know that communications can always be improved, I believe that the information being provided in the newsletter has been very informative and helpful to our employees.

The Staff Council has discussed many important topics over the last year in regards to our employees. I want to give you an update on a couple of those topics here.

In recent months there has been much discussion about the proposed change to the Parental Leave Policy. While a decision on whether or not to adopt a revised policy is forthcoming, the Staff Council was able to share the opinions of our employees and will continue to monitor and advise the Finance & Benefits Committee on this decision.

Another important topic has been promoting a healthy campus by working to move Washington College to a tobacco and smoke-free campus. The staff, faculty and student body have all been surveyed on this topic with many varying opinions. At this point the college is exploring cost effectiveness measures to provide designated smoking areas on campus. The decision to move in this direction was made after reviewing the survey results. We will report further as information becomes available.

Many other topics have been discussed including affordable child-care options for the campus community, staff cost of living raises, efforts to keep our health care costs at an affordable level, performance reviews, bullying in the workplace, use of a flex schedule, and distribution of our health care reimbursement from the past year. All of these topics have been brought forth by our staff or have been brought to us from Senior Staff. I know that the Staff Council will continue to discuss many important topics in the year ahead.

It has been a real pleasure to serve as the Chair of Staff Council this year. Not only have we accomplished a great deal, but I've also learned so much about our college by being a part of this group. Please continue to take your concerns to the Staff Council and all the best for a happy and healthy year.
COMINGS AND GOINGS

There were no new hires during the month of December

The Following Staff are no longer with WC: Stacey Davis and Anthony Hall

FEATURED EMPLOYEE

The featured employee for the month of December is Wendy Mitman Clarke

Featured Event

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration
January 19-30, 2015

January 19-30, 2015 – Clothing Drive: The Office of Multicultural Affairs will be collecting winter hats, scarves, and gloves to donate to children in need in the community.

January 19-30, 2015 – Random Act of Kindness: Do one act of kindness for a member of the WC or Kent County community. Post your experiences on Instagram!

January 19, 2015 – Historic speeches by Dr. King will be shown in Hodson Hall from 10:00am-2:00pm.

January 22, 2015 – Diversity Café: Are We Living in a Post Racial Society? Discussion on race relations in the United States. The Egg, 6:00pm.

UPCOMING EVENTS

COLLEGE OFFICES REOPEN
January 5, 2015

STUDENTS RETURN TO CAMPUS
January 17-18, 2015

TIAA CREF ONE-ON-ONES
January, multiple dates
OIT Classroom
Appointments still available, Call or email HR to schedule

UNDERGRADUATE CLASSES BEGIN
January 19, 2015

CLOTHING DRIVE
January 19-30, 2015
Drop off at the Office of Multicultural Affairs

PIANIST, THOMAS PANDOLFI
January 22, 2015 at 7:30pm
Decker Theater
Tickets $20-Adults, 18 and Under are Free

KENT CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES: ECLATANTE
January 24, 2015 from 7:00-9:00
Hotchkiss Recital Hall
Tickets $15 at the door

GRADUATE CLASSES BEGIN
January 26, 2015

For a full schedule of Athletic events please visit: washcoll.edu/athletics/

For a full schedule of Drama productions please visit: washcoll.edu/drama

For a full schedule of lectures open to the Washington College community please visit: washcoll.edu/calendar

DID YOU KNOW?

There is a WC Staff Facebook page?

Like us at: facebook.com/washcollstaff

“Wendy is a gifted story teller, equally adept with words and images. Her stories have been featured prominently on the College’s website, in the Washington College Magazine and in the new Admissions Campaign materials. Since joining the College Relations team she has embraced every opportunity to share compelling stories of our students’ success. She is a delightful colleague to work with and a real powerhouse."

TEAM RECOGNITION

On (or around) August 18 we had a 100 year storm that brought torrential rains to Chestertown. As a result the artificial turf field on Kibler was ruined and unplayable. Three fall sports (men and women soccer and field hockey) that use the field were scheduled to arrive within days to begin their pre-season workouts in preparation for their upcoming seasons. The only option available was to transform the two Bermuda practice fields into game-quality fields. This would be a challenge if given several months to accomplish, but extremely challenging given days. Sue Brown, Jack Davis, Randy Reynolds, Marshall Rash, Adam Gannon, Dave Starr, Mark Scott, Joe Case and Frank Buchanan immediately took on this challenge and set to the task. Their efforts included: traveling to Salisbury to transport Bermuda sod to patch key areas of the fields; purchasing and distributing grass seed and fertilizer to improve the quality of the grass; golf course type mowing of the fields daily to increase growth; moving and installing a scoreboard; purchasing and installing a generator to power the scoreboard; resurrecting a scoreboard that had not been used in 10 years; installing bleachers and portable sound systems; lining fields for practices and games; and maintaining the quality level of these fields throughout the fall while still maintaining their regular duties.

Their efforts made it so that the experience for our student-athletes was of high quality, safe, and enjoyable.