



**A REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON**

# **Retention of Staff**

Presented by  
The University of Texas at Austin Staff Council  
May 23, 2013



Approved by The University of Texas at Austin Staff Council  
and sent forward to the President

Prepared by The University of Texas at Austin Staff Council  
Annual committee on Staff Retention

Lauren Apter, Alex Banbury, Belle Bevington, Dave Burton, Janie  
Bushn, Cindy Crawford, Dawn Davis, Kayla Ford, Dan Galewsky,  
Nancy Hard, Vicki Miller, Susanna Olivarez

## **Executive Summary**

The University of Texas at Austin Staff Council committee on Employee Retention has been tasked with reviewing challenges the University currently has in retaining staff and how we can be most effective with our resources we already have.

Recruiting, hiring and training new staff can be very expensive. It's to our advantage to keep excellent staff here. Staff retention is not about just saving funds and keeping positions filled. It's about creating a workplace that is competitive with other companies, thereby bringing in the most qualified individuals to finish out their careers here at the university.

For this reason, our committee looked into three items that we believed could be a great resource to keep excellent staff here instead of looking elsewhere. We focused on three components that affect retention and are of concern to staff on this campus: A shortage of daycare opportunities, minimizing outsourcing of current staff positions, and supporting partner benefits.

## **Shortage of Daycare Opportunities**

As a committee we received feedback about a possible shortage of childcare and we wanted to see if there was a way to expand this service. We believe that expanding our daycare options would be an appealing tool to keep staff employed at the university. Our daycare has constantly been complimented and has a reputation for high quality service. It comes highly recommended and we wanted to see if there was a way we could help make this option available for more staff. Through our research, we realized some areas we were hoping to change, did not actually need any adjustments. Below are the most common myths about our current daycare.

*-There is an extremely long wait to get in.*

The wait list varies depending on the age of the child. The long wait usually only pertains to infant care. Any quality daycare will have this challenge. Part of this long list is also due to the fact that parents do not pull their name off of the wait list after they have moved on to other options. The “wait” does not really merit a reason to open another daycare. The current daycare director monitors the figures and indicated she could not fill another daycare facility. The student/teacher ratio is 3:1 for infants. This is a higher standard than your average day care, but is necessary to keep our accreditation. The challenge they face is that to sustain our daycare, you need a strong list of 3-5yr old children (as they require less staff), and the list is constantly full of infants, not older children, waiting to get in.

*-Faculty receives preferential treatment and this is used as a recruiting tool for new faculty.*

The Provost is given 12 slots to use to recruit faculty but they do not always use all of these. In fact, the children that are currently enrolled have parents that consist of 50% Staff Parents, 25% Faculty Parents & 25% Student parents.

*-A Daycare at Pickle would be a solution to help this long wait list.*

Based on what we have learned, there is not enough demand to warrant pursuit. The current daycare facilities now have a 3 million dollar bond for 30 years so they have zero funds to work with. Starting another day care would require significant funding, which is currently not available. The director also reminded us that people use the university daycare because they like having daycare where they work. The concern is, if people work at main campus, they will most likely not use a daycare at Pickle campus.

Based on our findings, we didn't find it in our interest to encourage our current daycare to expand. We would like to encourage the administration to consider the idea of adding an additional facility when plans are discussed with the new Medical School. With the resulting increase in students, staff and faculty this may be a greater need as we move forward.

### **Minimizing outsourcing**

In January 2013, the university published the findings of the Committee on Business Productivity and efforts began to transform this campus. We acknowledge that this campus does have to pay close attention to the financial situation at hand and explore sustainable options for the future. As university leaders research various solutions to meet our financial goals, Staff Council encourages the careful examination of all options with the goal of retaining services already offered in-house and thus, retain current staff as much as possible.

Outsourcing concerns exist throughout campus and led to a sense of job insecurity and uneasiness. Staff Council has approved a resolution in support of continuing to maintain quality service while retaining university employees. The resolution is included in Appendix A of this report.

### **Supporting Partner Benefits**

When considering insurance options and benefits to partners, we have not mirrored corporate America and what they are able to offer employees. We are not even offering the same as our peer institutions across the U.S. Although we cannot compete with the benefits our competitors are offering, Staff Council would like to reinforce our support for any benefits that can be offered to family members in the same household. To reinforce this we are developing a resolution in support of insurance benefits to partners within the same household.

### **Appendix A:**

**Resolution No. 2013-01**

**OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN STAFF COUNCIL GENERAL SESSION SUPPORTING THE PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS TO CONTINUE ON THE PATH TO BECOMING THE BEST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN AMERICA, WHILE MINIMIZING THE OUTSOURCING OF SERVICES CURRENTLY PROVIDED BY STAFF IN-HOUSE**

**Whereas** the potential downsides of outsourcing include loss of institutional control of the outsourced area, human resource concerns, and campus exposure to additional risks such as bankruptcy or the sale of a company; AND

**Whereas** outsourcing may create a lack of control with the quality of services; AND

**Whereas** the reputation and image of the university may be diminished by the quality of outsourced services that are incorrectly attributed to The University of Texas; AND

**Whereas** outsourcing impacts staff, faculty, and students directly by potentially creating job uncertainty, and loss of productivity AND

**Whereas** The University of Texas Staff Council has a vested interest in making the university a desirable, equitable, and competitive work environment, with a continuity of quality services,

**Now, therefore, let it be resolved** that The University of Texas Staff Council respectfully requests that President William C. Powers, Jr., take into consideration the concerns as stated in this Resolution of The University of Texas at Austin Staff Council when making final decisions regarding the outsourcing of services currently provided by The University of Texas staff and make every effort to maintain a quality University environment by minimizing such outsourcing and promoting transparency in any decisions significantly impacting the university Community