Staff Regent’s Report
Board of Regents Meeting
February 26, 2016
Nancy Strong, an Administrative Assistant in the College of Education and Human Services

Nancy’s passion for teaching others how to communicate with and support the Deaf community has been extraordinary. Here is a synopsis of Nancy’s efforts in her own words.

When a hearing family has a deaf child in Western Kentucky there are challenges for that child to learn language. American Sign Language (ASL) gives a child communication at an earlier age than spoken language or lip reading.

There are disadvantages to the use of American Sign Language (ASL) in Western Kentucky:
- There are only a few certified interpreters in Western Kentucky.
- People in the community do not know the language and the child is isolated.
- The child must be sent to a residential school several hours away to learn ASL.
- Children who are sent to a residential school to learn ASL return to parents who do not know their child’s language.

In addition to the deaf population benefiting from ASL, many special needs children also benefit from learning ASL. Many students majoring in Communication Disorders take ASL classes since they will from time to time have clients who communicate with ASL. Other ASL students include nursing majors and various other majors, students with deaf family members, students in ministry and some students who are interested in learning different languages.

These are some of the reasons that Nancy Strong has worked diligently since 2011 to offer ASL classes on Murray State University’s campus. Nancy developed and shepherded multiple ASL course syllabi through the university’s Academic Council curricular adoption process. She has addressed the challenge of finding qualified ASL instructors in this region. Since few qualified instructors live in this area or within driving distance of the university, these classes have been taught by video conference and by SKYPE. There are now 4 ASL classes listed in the MSU bulletin. 1st level classes are offered in the fall and spring semesters and 2nd level classes are taught in the spring semester only. For the first time, a third level ASL class will be offered in fall 2016 and if there is enough student interest, a fourth level class may be offered during the 2017 spring semester.

With 30+ students taking ASL classes each semester at MSU, those in the community who communicate with ASL are not as isolated when shopping or eating in local restaurants. Deaf students on campus can have a conversation with hearing students who have taken an ASL class.

Nancy states that it has been her goal for many years to offer ASL classes in Western Kentucky to benefit the deaf community, assist family and friends of deaf individuals and to raise deaf awareness in the community.
The Deaf educator's name is Max Williamson. He teaches via SKYPE from Washington, D.C. Nancy facilitates the course delivery to help hearing students communicate with Max. We also have some ASL sections that are taught face-to-face by other instructors. Nancy has found multiple, highly-qualified Deaf educators to teach these courses. It's a powerful way to learn!
Staff Congress has been busy raising funds for their Marie Jones Textbook Scholarship through printing photos with Santa at the Children’s Christmas Party (raised $210.00), a silent auction at the Staff Holiday Reception (raised $251.50), and working one of the concession stands at the January 09th Racer Basketball Game (raised $275.00).

With these funds ($736) added to the previous balance the book scholarship has a balance of $1891.25. (Before awarding the 2016 Spring Scholarships.)

**The Spring 2016 scholarship winners are:**
- **Xulong Peng**, staff member in the Watershed Science Institute
- **Connor Wagner** dependent of Mindy Wagner, Administrative Assistant for Branding, Marketing and Communication

Each were awarded a $250.00 scholarship.
Congratulations to Xulong Peng (far left) for being a recipient of the Marie Jones-Staff Congress Textbook Scholarship for Spring 2016. Winner is shown pictured with Staff Congress President Laura Lohr (far right) and Scholarship Committee Chair Jessica Evans (second from right).

Picture to the right is Connor Wagner, the staff dependent winner. Connor is a Freshman Marketing Major.
Staff Congress Election

Murray State University’s Staff Congress has accomplished many things in its 30 plus years of existence. It is an important voice in University matters.

Your participation is needed so Staff Congress can continue to effectively represent the staff of Murray State.

Of the 30 Staff Congress representatives, ten vacancies occur each year. Terms are for three years. Representatives are elected from each of the three employment categories. Each category has six representatives on Staff Congress. Twelve at-large members serve on Staff Congress; one of those is elected by the Breathitt Veterinary Center staff.

If a representative position is vacated prior to the end of the term, the seat will be filled when possible from a list of candidates who were not elected in previous elections. They are contacted in the order of votes received.

If you have questions, please contact Orville Herndon at oberndon@murraystate.edu or call 270-809-4401. Paper forms are available in Wilson Hall room 111E.

Candidate Eligibility Requirements

- Classified as a regular staff employee
- At least one year of continuous employment at Murray State University as of the date of the election (April 20, 2016)
- Does not hold any of these job titles: president, provost/vice president, associate provost, assistant provost, vice president, assistant vice president, vice president, assistant vice president, dean, or assistant dean

Election Openings

Term length—3 years (July 1, 2016—June 30, 2019)

Open positions

- Secretarial/Clerical: 2
- General/Facilities Management: 2
- Executive/Managerial/Professional: 4
- At-large: 2

Yes, I want to be a candidate for Staff Congress!

Name: ____________________________
Department: ______________________

E-mail: ____________________________
Work Phone: ______________________
Home/Cell Phone: __________________

Years of service at Murray State: [ ] Yes [ ] No

Previous service on Staff Congress: [ ] Yes [ ] No

If yes, how long did you serve? __________________

This form is available online at www.murraystate.edu/staff/congress. Forms submitted by email can be signed when the candidate photo is made. Please include your written answers to the following questions. You are limited to 250 total words. Your comments will be printed as submitted.

1. Why would you like to serve on Staff Congress?

2. Please list work experience and community involvement.

I will be a candidate in the following category (check only one):

[ ] A. Secretarial/Clerical
[ ] B. General/Facilities Management

[ ] C. Executive/Managerial/Professional
[ ] D. At-large

Sign Here (required): ____________________________

Please return signed form to Orville Herndon, 111E Wilson Hall; by mail to Staff Congress Election, c/o Orville Herndon, 2689 University Station, Murray, KY 42071 or email msu.staffcongress@murraystate.edu

Filing Deadline: Monday, April 11, 2016 – 4:30 p.m.
Completed form must be received no later than the deadline.
CALENDAR
2016 Staff Congress Election

Feb. 17  W  Staff Congress Monthly Meeting (committee review & revise intent form)
Feb. 24  W  Request employee database from Human Resources (C&E Chair)
March 2  W  Prepare candidacy intent forms and send to Copy Center
March 2  W  Print mailing labels
March 16 W  Staff Congress monthly meeting
March 22 W  Mail candidacy intent forms
March 21-25 W-F  Spring Break
March 29 Tu  Begin receiving candidacy forms (4:30 p.m.)
April 4  M  Place filing deadline reminder in Racer Nation Information
April 4  M  Request employee database from Human Resources
April 11 M  FILING DEADLINE FOR ELECTION (4:30 P.M.)
April 12 Tu  Contact Human Resources to verify candidate eligibility (C&E Chair)
April 13-15 W-F  Photo session (contact Orville)
April 15 F  Provide ballot listing to Information Systems’ VoteNet coordinator
April 18 M  Racer Nation Information—remind staff of election (C&E Chair)
April 18 M  Print mailing labels
April 18 M  Submit news release to The Murray State News and the Murray Ledger & Times
            (Communications Committee)
April 19 Tu  Prepare web page information for online voting (C&E Chair)
April 20 W  Proof ballot with Information Systems’ VoteNet coordinator
April 20 W  Staff Congress Monthly Meeting
April 21 Th  Prepare sample ballots/voting instructions: Print, fold, and mail (SC Secretary)
April 26-28 Tu-Th  ELECTION—Online Voting
April 29 F  Information Systems releases vote counts to CE Committee
May 18  W  Staff Congress Monthly Meeting (Announce Results)
# Staff Congress Members
## July 1, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial/Clerical</td>
<td>Executive/Managerial/Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Ends</td>
<td>Term Ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie Griffin</td>
<td>Brian Purcell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie Plummer</td>
<td>Chad Wortham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion Hale</td>
<td>Shanna Burgess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Lohr</td>
<td>Maria Rosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Matheny</td>
<td>Dana Howard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Young</td>
<td>Sheri Riddle</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>At-Large</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General/</td>
<td>Term Ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities Management</td>
<td>James Barnett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Ends</td>
<td>Ashley Rogers*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuck Plummer</td>
<td>Stephanie Totty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Wilson</td>
<td>Dwaine Willoughby*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timothy Jaeger</td>
<td>Tressa Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Long-Mendez</td>
<td>Rhonda Timmons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry O'Bryan</td>
<td>Tim Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenny Sanford</td>
<td>Jami Carroll, BVC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jessica Evans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Orville Herndon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robyn Pizzo</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Logan Stout</td>
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2015
Staff Perspective Survey

Presented to:
MSU Board of Regents
February 26, 2016

Presented by:
Phil Schooley, Staff Regent
Laura Lohr, Staff Congress President
Tressa Ross, Staff Congress Vice-President
Jessica Evans, Staff Congress Treasurer
John Young, Staff Congress Past-President
SUMMARY REPORT OF STAFF PERSPECTIVE SURVEY

Background and Data Collection
Since going to the on-line survey we have experienced great success in conducting our Staff Survey with over 50% of the surveys being returned. So, it was the desire of the Staff Congress to conduct the survey again in the fall of 2015 with some revisions made to the survey. Working again this year with Beth Sloan, a staff member in the Technology Support and Consulting Services (TSCS) formerly Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT), we were again able to submit the survey on-line with the use of Survey Monkey. An email listing was obtained with the help of Human Resources, and the survey was sent to 1014 staff, with 51 invalid email addresses (bounced back) and 31 opted out of taking the survey for a total of 932 staff receiving the email. Approximately six weeks for allowed 507 staff to respond giving a 54.4% response rate. The percentage of responses was up from the previous year, but the number of surveys sent out was again lower than the previous years. See results below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Mailed</th>
<th>Total Returned</th>
<th>Total Comments</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>959</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
<td>1,136</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>1,228</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>Varies by Question</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant/ Clerical</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>175</td>
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<tr>
<td>General (Food Service, Public Safety)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilities Management</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive/Managerial/ Professional</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>260</td>
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<tr>
<td>answered question</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skipped question</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL RETURNED</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>531</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL SENT OUT</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>1038</td>
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<tr>
<td>RESPONSE RATE (%)</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Sent out – from Email List</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid Email Addresses (bounced back)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opted out of taking survey</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total emails sent out</td>
<td>931</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Statistics
The survey is divided into four sections. The first section asked general questions to determine demographics of the staff that are taking part in the survey. The second section asks questions about the staff’s Impression of Staff Congress. The third section is weighted on a scale of 1 to 4 with one representing strongly disagree and four representing strongly agree. It contains 17 specific questions in three categories: overall institutional impression, staffing/work environment, and benefits/pay/recognition. A place for comments was provided at the end of each section. The third section asked three general open response questions to allow for employee feedback.

Based on the responses to the survey, there was almost identical representation of the employees by years of service as there has been for the past two years, with again the majority of 42.4% coming from employees who had 10 years or more of service.

Also, again of the four employment categories listed, administrative assistant/clerical and executive/managerial/professional provide the most responses with 409 (80.7%). In addition, the majority of respondents were full-time employees (96.5%). When asked if working conditions were better, about the same, or worse compared to a year ago, the majority at (81.9%) said they were the same or better which was up from last year’s (78.0%).
Results and Interpretations
From the second section with the weighted questions the overall responses to the questions were positive. However, there were statistically significant results noted:

Of the 17 questions the two that staff agreed most strongly with this year were:
- The President does a good job of communicating major developments.
  (Strongly Agree/Tend to Agree 92.0%)
- The President can be trusted to be straightforward and honest.
  (Strongly Agree/Tend to Agree 90.60%)

The one question that MSU staff most strongly disagreed with again this year was:
- Raises are given adequately and fairly for job performance.
  (Strongly Disagree/Tend to Disagree 68.4%)
  (The % of those disagreeing was up from the previous year’s 60.4%)

One different question that was added this year to the Overall Institutional Impression Category which was agreed with strongly is:
- I am aware of and have knowledge of the President’s Strategic Plan.
  (Strongly Agree/Tend to Agree 87.2%)
**Summary of Comments**

Individual comments were collected from five categories as well as three general questions listed at the end of the survey. Complete lists of all submitted comments will be included in the full report. Below summarizes each category and question:

**Impressions of Staff Congress** – Although there was 83.4% (408) of the staff that took the survey that found Staff Congress adequately represented them, down from last year’s 86.1% (429) but 90.0% (441) said they receive timely information from Staff Congress members. Also, 80.2% were aware of the Staff Congress book scholarship up from last year’s 72.3%, and the highest percentage 95.3% that Staff Congress hosts the Staff Recognition Luncheon and the highest contact/social media platform that the Staff is aware of is Email (Administration/Staff Regent/Staff Congress member) 87.1%.

**What suggestions do you have for the Staff Regent or Staff Congress?**

Work to raise the pay of MSU general workers. Competitive wages and regular cost of living increases. Keep working to improve conditions and benefits for our staff. Meet with staff on more regular bases. Come talk to employees directly. Live stream Staff Congress meetings. Keep up the good work. Do quarterly or bi-annual surveys that are smaller or more specific to working conditions. Find a way to impact health insurance costs. Do something for staff morale.

**Overall Institutional Impression Comments & Comments Regarding the President** –

We could not be better represented. He stops and greets students regularly; this builds our students’ self-esteem. Best place to work in Murray. Most Staff would recommend MSU as an employer to their family and friends. He is very friendly and engaging and I like that he remembers names/roles of employees. He is a very personable man and is thoughtful of others. He is a pleasure to work with.

**Staffing/Work Environment** – The majority of Staff feel our policy, benefit and employment-related information is adequately communicated (82.7%). There is a need for more staff in some areas and the sharing of responsibility among this staff. (We continue to be understaffed while demands just keep growing, and compensation remains stagnant.) Some departments do a great job with helping one another. But do think the University could do a better job with new hire training.

**Benefits/Pay/Recognition** – The majority of comments again this year reflected the need/desire to increase wages. Benefits – the cost of Health insurance increase has put a burden on a large number of the Staff.
GENERAL COMMENTS:

**What do you appreciate most about working for MSU?**
The people here are great to work with and quality of character of the Staff is great. We have good vacation, sick days, holidays, and tuition waivers plans – they are greatly appreciated along with the friendliness of upper administration. The Staff enjoy working with young people and being a part of college environment. Also, appreciate having access to all the activities on campus (sporting events, cultural events, concerts, etc.).

**What would make MSU a better place to work?**
The number one comment for this question, as in the past, was better pay. Higher pay always helps. Better raises. The return of wellness incentives. Better employee recognition. Better health insurance premiums. Many people are struggling with the even higher costs of healthcare this year. Open communication among and within all departments – Collaborate across departments, engage with other departments on events, projects, etc. Childcare and flex working time. And the standard suggestion better parking.

**Feel free to use this section to provide any additional comments/concerns:**
This section has all type of suggestions/concerns ranging from: MSU align their spring break with the surrounding K-12 systems. Appreciate the time that individuals devote to Staff Congress, it is time consuming. A four-day work week option in June and July or a week-long University summer closure would be a great employee benefit and break for 12-month staff. Murray State is the BEST place to work in Murray, KY in my opinion! I'm so proud to tell people I work for MSU!
I want to thank Facility Management, Food Services, Public Safety, and all others who were involved in taking care of our students during our winter storms.