

STAFF CONGRESS YEAR IN REVIEW

Representing staff. Advocating for change. Building community.

Throughout 2025–26, Staff Congress focused on strengthening staff voice, advocating for compensation and benefits, recognizing staff contributions, and creating opportunities for connection and professional growth. Staff feedback—through the annual Staff Perspective Survey, short surveys, and direct communication—continued to guide our priorities and advocacy.

BY THE NUMBERS

342 Staff Perspective
Survey responses

Staff advocacy
resolutions adopted **4**

7 Staff Success Week
professional development
sessions

Racer Spirit
Award recipients **46**

32.5% Staff Congress election turnout
up from 23.4% in 2025
(203 staff voted)

Agree they are adequately
represented by Staff Congress **69%**
(40% strongly agree + 29% somewhat agree)

85% Agree Staff Congress provides
timely communication
(58% strongly agree + 27% somewhat agree)

ADVOCATING FOR STAFF

Staff Congress moved staff concerns into formal advocacy, adopting four resolutions addressing issues identified by staff:

- **Equitable Compensation:** Advocated for compensation practices that support retention and recognize experience, performance and professional development.
- **Parking Benefits:** Advocated for parking benefits based on years of service.
- **Tuition Waiver Access:** Supported eliminating the six-month waiting period for employee and dependent tuition waivers.
- **Cumulative Service:** Supported recognizing employees' cumulative years of service to Murray State.

Staff Congress also presented Staff Perspective Survey results to the Board of Regents, ensuring staff feedback was shared directly with university leadership.

STAFF RECOGNITION

Staff Congress brought together service milestones, retirees, Racer Spirit Awards and Staff Excellence Awards in the annual Staff Recognition Ceremony.

The Racer Spirit Awards continued to provide a peer-nominated way to recognize employees for teamwork, positive leadership and campus engagement.



The ceremony also recognized 8 Staff Excellence Award recipients, with two honorees in each of the four categories.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff Success Week offered seven sessions between May 13 and May 22, with both in-person and Zoom opportunities. Topics included career planning, Canva, mindfulness, yoga, work/life balance, underutilized HR benefits, institutional assessment and IT tools. Four sessions were recorded for continued access through the Staff Congress website.

Staff Congress also awarded:

5 Marie Jones
Textbook Scholarships

\$250 through the Kay R. Hays Staff
Professional Development Fund

A Panera fundraiser generated an additional **\$61.29 for the scholarship fund.**

STAYING CONNECTED

Staff Congress continued working to make its programs and resources more visible across campus. The Communications Committee partnered with other committees to promote events, professional-development opportunities, scholarships, and staff-recognition programs.

The Staff Congress Facebook audience grew **10.4%**, while page visits increased **29.1%** during the year.

New-employee welcome communications were also updated to connect new staff with Staff Congress resources and recorded Staff Success Week sessions.

RESEARCHING WHAT COMES NEXT

Staff Congress conducted research and developed recommendations on issues that remain under consideration.

The Working Conditions Committee reviewed flexible and compressed work policies at **29 peer institutions** and developed potential summer work-schedule options.

Committees also explored possible improvements to **sick leave and mental-health supports**, including sick-bank provisions, leave for new employees and dependent-care needs.

LISTENING TO STAFF

The **2025–26 Staff Perspective Survey** received 342 responses, providing important feedback on working conditions, benefits, communication and university leadership.

Beyond the annual survey, Staff Congress expanded opportunities for year-round feedback through short Qualtrics surveys on issues including **cost-share distribution, Staff Success Week, the university budget town hall, and insurance and benefits**.

A **Comments, Concerns or Suggestions** form also provides staff with an ongoing way to contact Staff Congress, with identifying information optional. Staff Congress **followed up on 100% of submissions** received through the form.

WHAT STAFF TOLD US MATTERS MOST

COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION & BENEFITS • FLEXIBLE
WORK OPTIONS • CLEAR COMMUNICATION • FAIR AND
CONSISTENT POLICIES • STAFF RECOGNITION
• PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & ADVANCEMENT

Staff Congress will continue listening, advocating, and working with university leadership to advance the issues that matter most to Murray State staff.

WE ARE STAFF. WE ARE SUPPORTERS. WE ARE RACERS.



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