



# MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Staff Congress



# ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023





## Our Purpose

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Since 1983, Staff Congress has been representing all staff employees on the main campus and regional campuses. Our purpose is to create a strong bond with staff colleagues, solicit input, express concerns, and make suggestions and recommendations based upon staff feedback.

Staff Congress works to promote better cooperation between fellow staff members, University Administration, students, and faculty. When appropriate, Staff Congress makes recommendations to the Staff Regent, University Administration, and Board of Regents. We continually strive to facilitate communication and collaboration within the campus community.

## 2022-2023 Executive Council

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### President

Trish Lofton, Administrative Assistant  
Curris Center Administration Office

### Treasurer

Jodi Hanneman, Administrative Assistant  
Dean's Office/School of Nursing & Health Professions

### Staff Regent

Jessica R. Evans, Director of Assessment and Accreditation  
College of Education and Human Services

### Vice President

Matthew L. Jones, Coordinator of Graduate Recruitment and Retention  
Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

### Past President

Dr. J. David Wilson, Director of Housing and Residence Life  
Housing Office

### Secretary

Kim Cottingham

## 2022-2023 Members

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### Secretarial/Clerical Group:

Angela Guyton - Jones College of SET Dean's Office Admin. Asst.  
Marion Hale - Dept of Journalism/Mass Comm. Admin. Asst.  
Jodi Hanneman - School of Nursing Dean's Office Admin. Asst  
Angela Richerson - Recruitment Campus Visit Coordinator  
Brian Truskey - IS Service Mgmt Admin. Technology Coordinator

### General/Facilities Management Group:

Marty Anderson - FM Electric Shop Supervisor  
Russell Dunn - University Bookstore Shipping/Receiving  
Matthew Todd - FM Electric Shop Electrician

### Executive/Managerial/Professional Group

Duane Dycus - IS Information Security Officer  
Jeremy McKeel - Digital Media Services Manager  
Audrey Neal - TRIO Program Director  
Matt Purdy - Career Services Director  
J. David Wilson - Housing Office Director of Housing & Res. Life

### At-Large Group

Christian Barnes - Development Dir. Donor Engagement & Comm.  
Dedrick Brooks - Institutional Effectiveness Director  
S.G. Carthell - Multicultural Initiatives Executive Director  
Orville Herndon - Journalism/Mass Comm. Publications Sys. Mngr.  
Matt Jones - Graduate Office Recruitment & Retention Coordinator  
Sondra Kreger - BVC Business Coordinator  
Trish Lofton - Curris Center Administration Admin. Asst.

Kim Newbern - Greek Life Coordinator

Kendrick Quisenberry - Recruitment Sr. Associate Director  
Tressa Ross - COEHS Recruitment & Retention Coordinator



### 2022-2023 Staff Congress:

**Back Row (L-R):** Brian Truskey, Duane Dycus, Marty Anderson, Kendrick Quisenberry, Jeremy McKeel, Matt Todd, Matt Purdy, Joshua Hutson

**Front Row (L-R):** Dedrick Brooks, Sondra Kreger, Trish Lofton, Jodi Hanneman, Tressa Ross, Angela Richerson, Audrey Neal, Christian Barnes, Orville Herndon, Dr. Jessica Evans (Regent)

**Not pictured:** Kim Newbern, Angela Guyton, Dr. David Wilson, Matt Jones, Dr. SG Carthell, Russell Dunn, Marion Hale

## 2022-2023 Goals & Objectives

Staff Congress adopted new goals and objectives for 2022-2023. The purpose was to provide support to Murray State University staff by representing their needs, concerns, and interests through these enhanced efforts by the Staff Congress membership. Action items and ways to measure success were established to give guidance to responsible committees.

**Goal #1:** Create a multi-faceted approach to increase communication and engagement of staff, with intentional involvement of the regional campuses.

> Objective: Develop a comprehensive and inclusive communications plan to inform and engage staff through in-person contact and electronic communications.

**Goal #2:** Realign Staff Congress membership to accurately reflect constituency categories.

> Objective: Review the number of Staff Congress members in position categories to ensure staff are being fairly represented across constituency groups.

**Goal #3:** Provide enhanced support and guidance to Standing Committees so their work will reflect the 2022-2023 goals and objectives plan.

> Objective: Increase involvement of Standing Committees by creating measurable action items for the year.

## Impact on Policy

The Credentials and Election Committee tackled a Staff Congress Bylaws revision that was specified in the Goals and Objectives. This revision addressed the need of realigning the membership to accurately reflect the representation of constituency groups. The committee restructured the representation model based on common job types. The new model is based on each Vice President's areas of work. The regional campuses now have a Staff Congress representative position. Breathitt Veterinary Center will continue to have a representative on Staff Congress. The Board of Regents conducted the first reading of the Bylaws change at its June 2023 meeting.

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Committee researched and revised the policy on Overtime and Exceptional Compensation to address compensation for employees that are called back to work after normal working hours. Staff Congress passed the revised policy, which is currently under review by Human Resources, University Administration, and Legal Counsel.

## Communication

The Communications Committee addressed the goal of increasing communication with staff. In addition to emails, staff now have access to Staff Congress information through Facebook and Instagram. A social media calendar was created to ensure import news and information is published in a timely manner. A Google form was created so staff can be nominated for the Staff Spotlight which highlights the good work being done by staff.



## Staff Engagement

As part of the goal to increase communication and staff engagement, the Staff Congress Executive Council and Staff Regent conducted staff listening sessions. During the fall semester, a session was held on campus with a Zoom option. A joint listening session with the Madisonville, Henderson, Paducah, and Ft. Campbell regional campuses was held at the Hopkinsville Regional Campus. In addition, sessions were held at the Breathitt Veterinary Center and the Hancock Biological Station. The listening sessions provided a great opportunity to talk with staff about any issues or concerns along with a chance to discuss how Staff Congress represents staff. As part of the goal to realign constituency representation, Staff Congress voted to assign a member position to represent the regional campuses. In the 2023-2024 Staff Congress election, regional campuses will be able to vote for a regional campus nominee.

## Leadership

To address the goal of enhanced support and guidance to Standing Committees, a training session was held for all committee chairs. This training addressed how committees operated under the Bylaws. The committee chairs were tasked with identifying action items that would be directly tied to the goals and objectives.

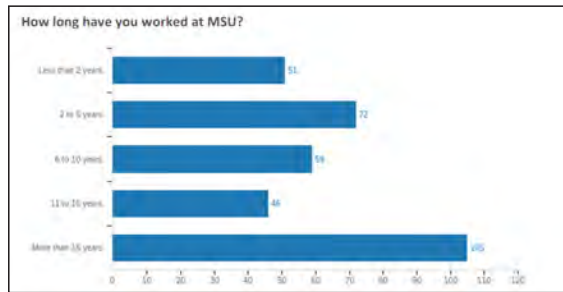
In addition, committees were asked to meet on a regular basis to complete their action items. At each monthly meeting, committees should be prepared to give a report of their activities. Overall, the committees did an excellent job to meet all of the goals.



## 22-23 Staff Perspective Survey

The following list of recommendations and comments are the result of the Staff Survey Committee's evaluation of the 2022-23 Staff Perspective Survey that was administered from March 6-30, 2023.

**Supervisor Training:** This recommendation regarding Supervisor training was made in 2022 and has now been completed. There is a need to explore opportunities for increased training or workshops regarding workplace culture/morale and bullying. It is recommended that research be conducted to find campus groups that could provide trainings or workshops as a staff professional development option. This could be in the form of a lunch and learn



format. **COLA Increases:** If current COLA / raises in the 2023-24 budget are not seen as equitable, the alternative is to develop a plan to recommend a tiered increase for 24-25 to bring lower-level staff up to higher pay levels. It is recommended to explore options for having Budget Advisory Committee or other university working committees create a long-term plan (aside from the current compensation study) to explore ways of increasing all university salaries up to levels that are adjusted for inflation. If future raises, across the board, cannot be implemented due to the cost, it is recommended that the university consider merit pay based on evaluations and recommendations from unit supervisors (and explore what this would look like). Staff Congress representatives and Staff Regent should be afforded the opportunity to review and study the complete Compensation Study.

**Remote Work Due to Weather-Related Closures:** This policy is currently being developed. A review and clarification is needed for weather-related closure policy, particularly when staff are expected to work from home. Guidance needs to be provided to departmental supervisors on the development of appropriate tasks for staff to complete if expected to work from home during these times.

**Flexible Hours:** Promote the option of more flexible hours in general but more so during summer. Request that staff receive same days off as faculty for fall and spring break. Explore the feasibility of moving to a 4-day work week or other flexible hours for the summer term. It seems that the current Flexible Work Arrangement Policy does not address university closure. The Overtime and Exceptional Compensation policy has been reviewed but there have been no updates regarding staff compensation options such as hazard pay. There will be followup to reach out to Human Resources for further clarification.

**Tuition Waivers:** Continue working on these tasks: Follow up with HR about the inclusion of course fees in tuition waiver amounts. Facilitate a discussion about increased options for tuition waivers: restoring waivers to part-time employees, allowing employees to bank waivers for future years, expanding waivers to cover doctoral level courses, expanding waivers for retired employees and dependents.

**New Staff Orientation:** Continue working on staff orientation. Encourage upper administration to offer more opportunities to meet with all staff to encourage open lines of communication and commitment (town halls, listening sessions, morning coffee groups, etc.). These events should be provided at multiple times throughout the year, not just in advance of the budget.

**Staff Recognition:** Continue with this task as assigned. Collaborate with Staff Recognition and Awards committee for additional recognition opportunities, including the addition of new awards.

**Advancement Opportunities:** Continue with prior year recommendation for Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee to discuss with Human Resources the current application of these policies. Revisions may be needed to achieve equity in advancement opportunities for promotion, transfer, and salary increases due to position changes. Additionally, the standing committee may consider 'longevity raises', or creation of a policy for employees to receive a percentage increase in base salary after achieving milestone years of service (ie: 5, 10, 15), or a similar model used for promotion of faculty. There are a lot of staff survey comments that support these options of merit pay, opportunities for promotions, increased pay if staff get increased education levels, etc.

**Hiring/Filling of Vacancies:** The Personnel Policies and Benefits Committee should be prepared to take action once the results of the current compensation study are released. Advocate for the release of the raw data and other information that will make up the final report.



**Staff Congress Representation:** Completed. The revised policy to realign staff representation had a first reading at the June 2023 meeting.

**Additional benefits:** Explore the provision of additional benefits for employees, particularly free parking, free Wellness Center usage, and stipends to offset benefits that aren't used (health insurance, etc.).



# Committee Accomplishments

## Communications Committee: Jeremy McKeel and Brian Truskey, Co-Chairs

- Obtained administrative rights to Staff Congress's Facebook page. Updated and maintains page.
- Added Instagram to social media channels.
- Developed a communication calendar for social media.
- Promoted events to encourage attendance and promoted post-event successes.
- Created Staff Spotlight social media posts to promote excellence in staff service.

## Credentials and Elections Committee: Orville Herndon, Chair

- Studied Staff Congress organization structure and suggested moving from a model based on job classification to one based on the University's organization structure.
- Revised Staff Congress bylaws to transition to the organization structure model, add a representative for extended campuses, and give full voting and candidacy rights to Breathitt Veterinary Center employees.

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee: Kim Newbern, Chair

- Conducted research from peer institutions in the areas of cultural competency training, programming and recruitment/retention of diverse staff.

## Personnel Policy and Procedure Committee: Marty Anderson, Chair

- Review of other benchmark universities' policies and procedures.
- Determined that the University's policy on call backs and after-hours communications is not as robust as other institutions. A revised policy proposal has been written and passed by Staff Congress. It is currently pending review by Human Resources, University Administration, and Legal Counsel.

## Scholarship Committee: Jodi Hanneman, Chair

- Reviewed budgets of the Kay R. Hayes Staff Professional Development Scholarship and the Staff Congress Foundation/Marie Jones Textbook Scholarship.
- Scheduled several rebate nights at area restaurants as scholarship fundraisers.
- Fundraising was so successful that two professional development scholarships were awarded in Spring 2023.

## Special Events and Staff Recognition Committee: Matt Purdy, Chair

- Formalized procedures for all major Staff Congress events (Children's Holiday Party, Staff Holiday Recognition, Spring Staff Appreciation Breakfast).
- Discovered new venues that may be conducive to future events
- Partnered with RCA to assist in the Staff Congress Children's Holiday Party.
- Identified several pinch points to help increase numbers of campus nominations for staff recognition awards.
- Revamped event promotion materials and communication schedules.

## Working Conditions: Brian Truskey, Chair

- In 2021-2022, the committee did a comprehensive review of Wayne Corp videos, specifically geared towards supervisors, and made recommendations to Human Resources as an option for on-campus supervisor training. This research was done in response to the Staff Perspective Survey results.
- In 2022-2023, Human Resources developed supervisor training program to address the need of supervisory skills.

# Scholarships

In February 2023, the Scholarship Committee selected scholarship recipients for the Kay R. Hayes/Staff Congress Professional Development Scholarship. Two Counseling Center counselors were awarded scholarships to offset specialized therapy training. Valerie Ernstberger and Brittney Woods were awarded \$150 each. This was the first time that scholarships were awarded for professional development.

Due to low funds, there were no Staff Congress Foundation/Marie Jones Textbook Scholarship recipients selected. The Scholarship Committee worked throughout the fall 2022 semester raising funds through rebate nights at local restaurants. They did fantastic job and provided much needed funds.

# University Service

Staff Congress members, including the Staff Congress President and Staff Regent, periodically serve on University-wide committees and advisory councils:

- Faculty/Staff Insurance & Benefits Committee - Orville Herndon, Duane Dycus, Marty Anderson, Marion Hale, Sondra Kreger
- Intercollegiate Athletic Council - Duane Dycus

- Naming Campus Facilities Committee - Dedrick Brooks
- Judicial Board - Matt Jones
- Sick Leave Appeals - Duane Dycus
- Budget Advisory Committee - Audrey Neal, Matt Jones
- Parking Advisory Committee - Duane Dycus, Kim Newbern, Trish Lofton
- International Studies Advisory Council - Dr. S. G. Carthell



# 2022-2023 STAFF CONGRESS EVENTS

## Years of Service - 20 - 45 years



## Staff Excellence Awards





## Staff Listening Sessions, Fall 2022



## Children's Christmas Party December 3, 2022



## Staff Recognition & Holiday Gathering December 13, 2022



## Staff Appreciation Breakfast May 18, 2023







# MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY



Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status or disability in employment or application for employment, admissions or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities.