Staff Council Rural Affairs Committee

Annual Report   May 2010

The Rural Affairs Committee has been without a chair for several months until March 2010 when Susan Baird of the Kuskokwim Campus offered to take on the assignment. After initial contact with prior members to gauge interest in remaining on the committee, 21 people, representing 14 groups, expressed a desire to be or remain on the committee.

The charge to the committee is to:

Oversee general welfare of the UAF community not residing on the Fairbanks campus

Monitor all activities affecting compliance with the Rural Campus mission statement of the University of Alaska Fairbanks: *UAF has community and rural campuses in downtown Fairbanks, Bethel, Dillingham, Kotzebue and Nome, and maintains six community centers through its Interior-Aleutians Campus in Fairbanks. These branches, part of the College of Rural and Community Development, are central to fulfilling the UAF mission of **providing educational opportunities throughout the state**.*

After updating the membership list to reflect Google Mail addresses and reviewing the past goals of the committee, the chair polled members to find a mutually acceptable monthly meeting date. Tentatively, that will be the first Tuesday of each month (no meeting was held in May), but may change following a Doodle survey mid May.

Meeting Discussion Items:

1. Connectivity issues on rural campuses that often result in: slow or dropped connections during attempts to register students and during course delivery; inability to download large or even medium files; campuses bumping up against maximum bandwidth nearly 24 hours of the day, etc.

2. Efficient and timely textbook delivery to rural campuses. Much improvement seen since textbook ordering and delivery for fall 2009, including recent development of a flyer and wording in the print schedule, but there is still concern over weather and schedule change delays in shipments to outlying areas. Possible solutions included having the first few chapters available online from publisher, scanned and emailed or saved on a disc to mail prior to first class meeting.

3. Confidentiality of election votes cast by members calling in to meetings, however that has resolved by having members email their votes to Nicole rather than voting over phone connection.

4. Safety training being required by adjuncts but they do not get paid for the hours it takes to do it, so compliance is somewhat compromised.

5. Margaret "Peggy" Woods award (which recognizes an outstanding rural campus staff member) information sent to all rural campuses to solicit nominations. Staff Recognition Subcommittee reviews nominations and selects winner. Chair sent requests to all rural campus directors for traditional funding. See attached report from subcommittee.

6. Work from Staff Appreciation Committee to push activities of the day out to rural campuses.

7. Professional development for rural campus staff members to offset loss of institutional efficiency because of turnover.

Rural Affairs Subcommittee: Margaret "Peggy" Wood Award

Members: Ashley Munro, Loretto Jones, Richard Machida, Travis Brinzow

The nomination period opened in March of 2010. We received three nominations. One of those nominees was a Director of a campus and was ineligible for the award. From the remaining two nominations, the committee chose Gail Staudinger as the recipient.

Gail will receive a plaque for her to keep and her name will be added to the traveling plaque, which stays with the award winner's campus throughout the next year. Pete Pinney will announce the award at the Staff Appreciation Day Longevity Award Ceremony on May 19. Gail will not be able to attend, but the ceremony will be web-streamed to areas outside of Fairbanks.

There is a lot of concern over the inconsistency of the award and the lack of guidelines from the CRCD Directors. The CRCD Vice Chancellor's Office has been informed of these issues and will be working on creating new guidelines for the 2010-2011 award year. Bambi Nelson has agreed to be the contact to work on this project.