

A Newsletter for University Support Staff of Kansas State—February 2018



## Important Dates

**February 1st:**

Reclassification window open for Position Descriptions

**February 16th:**

Nomination deadline for USS Employee of the Year, USS Award of Excellence and USS Belonging Award

**March 15th:**

Open Forum with President Myers; Forum Hall starting at 10:30am

**April 18th:**

USS Recognition Ceremony, Union Ballroom

## Opportunity is knocking; Join the University Support Staff Senate

With the Spring Semester upon us, the University Support Staff (USS) Senate will be accepting nominations for elections to be held in March to fill Senate positions coming open for the 2018-2021 term. All permanent full-time and part-time University Support Staff employees of Kansas State University are eligible to be nominated.

Forms are being mailed out to only those colleges and administrative units with open positions. The nomination period is between February 1 and February 20. Nominations shall be accepted by signature of the nominee. Eligibility of all nominations returned shall be verified by a combination of the Governmental Affairs Committee and Human Capital Services. Any nomination received after February 20 will be judged late and not considered.

USS Senate voting will take place electronically from March 1 thru 15. The ballot will contain a list of all the candidates and voting is extended to all full-time and part-time University Support Staff employees from each specific college or administrative unit where a position is to be filled.

The following colleges and units have open positions for Senate representation:

Agriculture and Extension, 1 position; Architecture, Planning & Design, 1 position; Engineering, 1 position; Human Ecology, 1 position; Veterinary Medicine, 1 position; Administration and Finance, 2 positions; Student Life, 2 positions

## 2017 Employee Award Nominations due February 16th

All around campus, USS Employees are hard at work helping students, assisting community members, and advancing the mission of our University. It is time to take a moment and nominate an employee you have seen do the incredible this past year. The University Support Staff Awards of Excellence, honor three individuals that have excelled in their position this year with a \$1000 award and recognition at our USS staff ceremony April 18, 2018. One winner is selected from each of the following areas: office and clerical; technical and professional; and service, maintenance and skilled crafts.

This year a new award will be given, the University Support Staff Belonging Award. This award was created to honor outstanding work on inclusivity and belonging efforts here at K-State and also offers a \$1000 award to the recipient.

The deadline to nominate a University Support Staff employee is February 16, 2018. More information on the nomination process can be found by visiting the Human Resources Capital Services webpage and navigating to the Supervisor Manager Tools where it lists these and other ideas for awarding employee performance.



## Resources Available during the Legislative Session

During the Legislative session, the Office of Governmental Relations offers many resources to the campus community to learn about legislation and the potential impacts to Kansas State University.

- Legislative Review Sessions are offered every other Friday. These sessions give staff the opportunity to hear what the current discussions are at the Legislative level and ask questions of the Governmental Relations team.
- The Governmental Relations Office offers a monthly newsletter to the campus community. Current and past newsletters are available on the Governmental Relations webpage: [k-state.edu/govrelations/](http://k-state.edu/govrelations/)
- K-State today updates are published every Tuesday for timely updates to the campus community
- Governmental Relations staff are available to answer staff questions by calling 785-532-6227 or emailing [kstategr@ksu.edu](mailto:kstategr@ksu.edu)

In addition to the resources available at Kansas State, the State Library provides a free hotline to allow the public to access a variety of information. Additional services provided by the State Library include instatement message change and the ability to test questions.

**Hotline:** 1-800-432-394 (in-state) or 785-296-2149

**Instate Message Chat:** [www.kslib.info/ask-a-librarian](http://www.kslib.info/ask-a-librarian)

**Text Questions:** 785-256-0733

# Fall 2017 Rewind...

## University Support Staff Layoff Policy

The Layoff Policy for University Support Staff Employees was issued on September 11, 2017. Previous to this date there were general guidelines without a formal policy to be followed by departments. This caused variation and differing treatment for employees across campus.

A committee was brought together with representatives across the university including previous USS Senator, Janel Harder, College of Education. She stated there was much deliberation on the wording of the policy, seeking the protection of the many USS employees across campus.

One of the improvements Janel and the committee were able to make was to extend the notification time from the previous 30 days to 45 days. The layoff formula was a sensitive area. Given the ongoing issue of training for USS supervisors in quality evaluations, "The goal was to protect the many people who do not receive the rating that they deserve. The only equitable way was to take the supervisor's subjective opinions out of the layoff formula." This layoff policy in no way means that a layoff is imminent. Human Capital Services has not heard talk of layoffs from any college across campus even after the recent callbacks.

For more information, including guidelines and procedures to be followed in the event of a layoff of permanent USS staff, definition of a Layoff, the notification procedure, bumping rights and employee options, layoff scores among others, please go to the following webpage: <https://www.k-state.edu/policies/ppm/4000/4065.html>



## Partnering with our fellow USS

Each year, K-State's University Support Staff Senate leadership works with our counterparts at the other Kansas Board of Regents schools to advance issues and bring attention to concerns of University Support Staff around Kansas. This group, called the University Support Staff Council, works together to present updates to the Council of President's monthly and to the Board of Regents twice a year. This year, K-State's USS Senate President, Carrie Fink, has the honor of chairing the Council and presenting on behalf of the Council.

During the Fall semester, the USS Council voiced concerns to the Council of Presidents and Board of Regents about health insurance benefits and the impacts on staff to seek care and the feasibility of being able to pay such high deductibles and out of pocket costs. The issue of rising insurance premiums, taxes, and other obligations have outpaced employee salary increases for so long the impact has been a paycheck that has decreased over time.

Moving forward, the USS council is developing a survey to send out to all USS employees at the six Regent schools to gain information on topics such as morale and the impacts of budget restraints. The Council will use this information in the future to help determine priorities and use the results to show the real impact decisions are having on our university communities.