



# in TOUCH

UNC EMPLOYEE FORUM NEWS | READ US ONLINE: FORUM.UNC.EDU | OCTOBER 2014

## Same-sex spouses of employees eligible for benefits

By Katie Turner

Employee Forum PR and  
Communications Committee chair

On Oct. 14, Chancellor Carol Folt announced the extension of benefits to same-sex spouses of qualified UNC-Chapel Hill employees.

Her announcement came as a result of the Oct. 10 ruling that struck down North Carolina's ban on same-sex marriage.

In a message to the campus community, Chancellor Folt said she was pleased that the State Health Plan and NC Flex had begun immediate enrollment for same-sex marriages performed prior to Oct. 13.

"Same-sex marriages performed after this date would be treated as qualifying events, just as with opposite-sex marriages," she elaborated.

According to the State Employee Health Plan website, the recent ruling "is considered a qualifying life event and eligible spouses will have 30 days to add their spouse. ... Beyond this initial 30 days, marriage is a qualifying life event and members will have 30 days to add a spouse to their health plan coverage."

The effective date of coverage for this enrollment cycle is Nov. 1, 2014.

The LGBTQ Center released a statement in response to the decision, which emphasizes the importance of benefits equity to staff recruitment and retention.

"The LGBTQ Center applauds the



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE TURNER

Angel Collie, assistant director of the LGBTQ Center, passes out information to staff about the center's programming. Collie is raising awareness of the announcement that the University's benefit programs will extend to partners of same-sex couples who are employed at Carolina. The announcement came as a result of a recent court ruling that struck down the ban on same-sex marriage.

announcement by Chancellor Folt and Vice Chancellor Washington that UNC employees with same sex partners will now be able to have equality in health insurance benefits," the statement said. "This is an important step toward living up to the non-discrimination statement

and will make UNC more competitive in recruiting and retaining the highest quality employees."

At a recent meeting of the Employee Forum with the vice chancellors, Associate Vice Chancellor Matt Brody said staff in the Office

Human of Resources were "excited about this new development" and they "welcome developments surrounding spousal equivalence."

For more information on enrollment, visit <http://go.unc.edu/x6N7F>

## Revised sexual assault, harassment policy affects staff as well as students

By Kelli Raker  
Employee Forum delegate

The Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct, including Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment, Sexual Violence, Interpersonal Violence and Stalking became effective on August 28, 2014. The policy applies to all employees and students. It clearly defines the types of conduct prohibited by the

University and clarifies key terms such as "consent."

The University also adopted new procedures for reports involving a student as the responding party.

This change means that if a member of the faculty or staff report experiencing discrimination, harassment or related misconduct that is prohibited by the policy from a student, the new procedures apply. These procedures provide an easily navigable adjudication pro-

cess.

A 22-member task force comprising students, faculty, staff and a community member drafted recommendations for the revision of the policy.

The task force reviewed and improved University processes for reports of sexual misconduct and discrimination. Last summer, Employee Forum members participated in task force meetings and contributed to recommendations for defining terms

such as "sexual harassment."

The University plans to begin reviewing procedures involving faculty and staff as the responding party in the near future. Stay tuned for information about new training from the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office about the policy and how to support students or your fellow staff members if they experience discrimination, harassment or related misconduct.

All employees are encouraged

to review the new definitions in the policy and resources on campus. You can learn more information at <http://sexualassaultanddiscriminationpolicy.unc.edu> or on the main portal for information and resources about such conduct at <http://safe.unc.edu>.

Want to learn more right now? Sign up for a HAVEN training at <http://safe.unc.edu/haven>

*Kelli Raker served on the task force.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE TURNER

Delegates Ana Schwab and Yvonne Dunlap greet staff at the Employee Forum's table.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE TURNER

Staff do the "wobble."

# Staff 'kick up their heels' at Appreciation Day

By Katie Turner  
Employee Forum PR and  
Communications Committee chair

Staff had much to be thankful for this Employee Appreciation Day. After a week of cold wind and rain, the Carolina blue skies and mild weather set the scene for a day of fun outdoor entertainment.

The Office of Human Resources at UNC-Chapel Hill sponsored the annual Employee Appreciation Day event of activities and free

food. Tents and information booths lined the courtyard in front of Davis library. Facilities employees were gathered around basketball hoops, while others enjoyed a complimentary breakfast of fruit, bagels and coffee provided by Carolina Catering.

In the Great Hall of the Student Union building, departments set up table displays with raffles, swag and information about their programs. One of the more popular activities was the cash booth. Staff who caught marked bills were awarded a prize that corresponded

with the bill captured.

Liquid Pleasure entertained the crowd outside of the Frank Porter Graham Student Union with a sultry blend of old soul and hip-hop songs. The group performed animated renditions of "Brick House," "Soul Man," "Baby Got Back," and "Hot in Herre." A cover of V.I.C.'s "Wobble" brought a dozen well-coordinated staff to the dance floor.

Forum delegates Josh Ferrari, Matt McKirahan, Ana Schwab, Tammy Cox, Yvonne Dunlap, Todd Hux, Lois Douglass-

Alston, Arlene Medder and Kathy Ramsey greeted staff members at the Employee Forum table. They educated staff about the Employee Forum Book Club, programs and committees.

The event impressed new staff members who hadn't previously attended. Justin Hubbard, assistant program manager at World View, described the atmosphere of the event, "This is my first Employee Appreciation Day at Carolina. I didn't know what to expect, but it turned out to be a fun community event with great food."

## Take your seat for our next book club event

By Ronda Manuel  
Employee Forum delegate

Since its inception in 2013, the Employee Forum Book Club has engaged staff throughout the University. It serves as an opportunity for staff to step away from their daily routines to interact with colleagues through thoughtful and intellectual discussion on a specific book and topic.

The chair of the Employee Forum, Charles Streeter said although the conversation may begin with a discussion around the book, it may lead to dialogue about deeper issues.

The September book selection allowed UNC staff to join the campus discussion on the first-year summer reading selection, *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich. This award-

winning novel addresses the issue of sexual assault and the ethics of social justice from the perspective of a Native American adolescent on a reservation in North Dakota.

Those who gathered to discuss the book included Administrative Support Specialist Margie Scott from the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. Scott chose to attend in order to meet other colleagues around campus and to have an outlet from the day to day work routine.

"The Book Club allows us to share different perspectives that some of us may have missed. It is very interesting to see different ideas and perspectives people have from reading the same book," Scott explained.

In October, the Forum hosted another intriguing conversation about the late Maya

Angelou's book, *The Heart of a Woman*. In this story, Angelou shares the personal experiences of black American artists and writers in New York seeking their place in the world. Through her struggles on this path, Angelou also chronicles the experience of raising a black man in America.

If you are interested in learning more about the Employee Forum's Book Club, please contact [employeeforum@unc.edu](mailto:employeeforum@unc.edu).

It is not too late to register for *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman on Wednesday, November 26. We hope you and your colleagues will join us to share your perspective and to participate in the discussion. Be sure to register to reserve your space at <http://tinyurl.com/p92acnp> to receive a free lunch.

### Upcoming selections

#### November

Wednesday, November 26 at noon— *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* by Neil Gaiman

#### December-January

(no meeting in December)

Friday, January 30, 2015 at noon— *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt

#### February

Friday, February 20, 2015 at noon — *Tales of the City* by Armistead Maupin

#### March

Friday, March 27, 2015 at noon— *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo

#### April

Thursday, April 30, 2015 at noon— *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides

Also see the Daily Tar Heel article titled "UNC employees build literary connections" at <http://go.unc.edu/Wj64D>

# Staff profile: Newton Lawrence, Moving Services

By Katie Turner  
Public Relations and  
Communications chair

Newton Lawrence is the man responsible for keeping the University moving. He holds the title of Vehicle Equipment Operator, but his job entails so much more.

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Mr. Lawrence about what drew him to Carolina, his secret to longevity in the housekeeping department and some of the strangest places he's been on campus. I started by asking him about his background before he came to Carolina.

**NL:** I was born and raised in Kingston, Jamaica. My wife and I were friends from our child days, when we were young teenagers. She migrated to the United States and after a couple years passed she came back to visit. We had children, and she would bring them back and forth from the U.S. to Jamaica to visit me. We did that for six years until I finally came to the U.S. in 2000. She was working as a housekeeper for the Holiday Inn and the University. Now she works in an after-school program in the public school system.

**KT:** What positions and job titles have you had?

**NL:** I got a temporary job with housing support at the University in August of 2000. I worked as a temp until I got a permanent position in housekeeping in 2003. I worked with that group for about a year until I became group leader in 2004.

**KT:** What do you like best about working at the university?

**NL:** I love meeting new people and learning about different cultures. I have to say my favorite thing is the diversity of university.

**KT:** Can you give an example?

**NL:** This person I met a couple years ago was from Burma, and he taught me a lot about his culture. It was hard to understand and vague because of his communication skills. I met one lady I work with who is Native American and she would tell me about her background.

**KT:** What is an average day like in the moving services department?

**NL:** My average day is busy. Moving furniture is my main priority, but I also help another group that delivers housekeeping supplies across campus. Sometimes when they are backed up or others aren't around I step up and help. Their crew will help me if we are short-handed with a move.

**KT:** What is the biggest challenge of working at the university?

**NL:** The biggest challenge is moving furniture in tight spaces when the stairwells are narrow and there's no elevator.

**KT:** What is the hardest move you've ever had to do?

**NL:** Since I've been at the university the hardest move was moving Dr. [Christopher] Payne from the first floor of Carr building to the third floor. That day I went home and my muscles were cramping. [Interviewer's note: Carr building is one of the few buildings on

campus without an elevator. Its tight, steep staircases make carrying things up and down especially hazardous.]

**KT:** Where is the strangest place you've ever done a move? Attics? Basements of old buildings?

**NL:** One time I did a move in Brinkhous-Bullitt and had to use the elevator for the move. That was hard for me because I've never seen a dead body before. We used the same elevator that the staff used to transport bodies for autopsies. That's the strangest and weirdest elevator encounter I've ever had. I never really thought of dead person like that. I was thinking about the people mourning for the loss of that person. That was strange to me.

**KT:** Can you share a little bit about hobbies?

**NL:** I'm a movie fanatic. I like action movies or watching basketball. My two favorites are Tar Heel basketball and Lakers' basketball. Sometimes the Heels will play and the Lakers will come on after, and that is a full night for me. (chuckling) I like music, too. Back in Jamaica I was a DJ. I got an iPad Mini at Student Stores. I found out there's a DJ2 app and I loaded that up on it. I like to plug it in to my surround sound and deejay for the home crowd. I'm a reggae fan. I like some R n B, but my main music is reggae.

**KT:** If there's one thing you wish you knew when you started working at Carolina what would it be?

**NL:** I can't say there are any changes I would have made. For me to advise a person coming in, I would tell them this is a wonderful



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLES STREETER

organization. Play your role. That's what I do.

Finally, I wondered how Newton had managed to stay in Moving Services so long when so many others hadn't. It's a physically demanding job and the work isn't always recognized or appreciated. I asked him what his secret was to longevity at Carolina. He said, "Be positive and do everything to the best of your ability. Stay on top of things and be mindful of your surroundings."

He paused for a moment and added with a knowing smile and laugh, "And follow the rules."



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATIE TURNER

Campus Community Garden director Claire Lorch greets staff at Employee Appreciation Day.

## Volunteering in the Community Garden

By Arlene Medder  
Carolina Campus Community  
Garden Committee chair

Did you know that you can bring a group to the Carolina Campus Community Garden to volunteer? It is a great team building exercise and the garden is always thrilled to have help.

Kelli Raker, an Employee Forum delegate, learned about the garden through the Forum. The Office of Student Wellness has their staff training in August, which includes team-building. They have done a ropes course previously, but this year they volunteered at the CCCG. Those who took part said they enjoyed it and plan to return to the garden to volunteer. An extra benefit: team-building at the garden is free!

The UNC Food Research Program also volunteered in the garden. They understand the importance of access to healthy food. They volunteered in the garden to support the garden's mission to provide access to fresh fruits and vegetables to UNC employees. Jessica Davis, a research assistant in the program, said they enjoyed spending time in the garden clearing, preparing and planting fall crops. Those crops will eventually nourish some of the housekeeping staff who help to make UNC a great place to work.

Every year, the School of Law sponsors a work day volunteer event at the CCCG. The law school provides a van to shuttle volunteers from the law library and school to the garden.

Nadera Salaam, director of human resources at the School of Law and

a former delegate to the Employee Forum, recounted her experiences in the garden. In the summer, she volunteers with her son. She feels the garden is a great way for children and adults to learn about our food. From the Philadelphia suburbs, she is interested in learning what fruits and vegetables look like in their natural state. She is more selective at the store, she frequents farmers' markets, and she takes part in community supported agriculture programs.

Volunteering in the Garden qualifies as Community Service Leave. Garden workdays are 3-6 p.m. Sundays and 4-6 p.m. Wednesdays. Arrangements can be made for groups at other times.

For more information: <http://uncgarden.web.unc.edu> or contact Claire Lorch at [clorch@email.unc.edu](mailto:clorch@email.unc.edu).

# #UNCstaff take over Twitter for scavenger hunt



As students prepare to return to classes, staff are especially busy. We are tidying up the campus, arranging meetings for the school year, helping students with their schedules and directing nervous parents as they navigate the campus with carloads of dorm supplies. To ease the transition to the new academic year and add to the excitement, the Employee Forum sponsored a fun event on campus for staff.

On Aug. 15, the Employee Forum held a scavenger hunt that involved staff from all corners of campus, and even as far as Morehead City. Using our Twitter handle (@EmployeeForum) and #UNCstaff, we posted clues about the locations of 50 prize vouchers. Employee Forum delegates volunteered to hide vouchers and tweet clues.

Staff members who found vouchers took pictures of themselves and their colleagues and posted them to Twitter. The winners sent their vouchers to the Forum office and redeemed them for donated prizes. All winners were entered in a grand prize drawing for a free Kindle.

The Employee Forum would like to recognize the following generous volunteers and sponsors for donating gifts and services to the scavenger hunt:

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|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Daily Grind                | McAlister's    | Old Chicago      |
| Bull's Head Bookshop       | Chipotle       | UNC Athletics    |
| Nicole Spruell Photography | Dank Burritos  | Carolina Brewery |
| UNC Student Stores         | Hickory Tavern | Noodles & Co.    |
| Sutton's                   | Ben & Jerry's  | Top of the Hill  |
| Starbucks                  | Fleet Feet     | SEANC            |
| UNC Aux. Services          | RnR Grill      | Evan Adair       |
| Aveda                      | Venable Bistro |                  |

## Tweet much?

By **Tammy Cox**  
Employee Forum  
treasurer  
@gettammy

For those of us who are novice tweeters, the Employee Forum organized a staff Twitter Basics class. The idea sprung from the scavenger hunt held earlier in the season which used Twitter as a platform to give clues to the hidden treasures. In addition to giving away great gifts, including a grand prize Kindle, it gave many of us an interest in learning how to

tweet.

Andy Bechtel, associate professor of journalism and mass communication, agreed to teach us the basics. Registration was filled to capacity and a wait list was created for those who did not get a chance to register early. The class, held on Oct. 16 at Davis Library, included a tour of Twitter, as well as a hands-on opportunity to establish accounts for those without one and to enhance skills for others.

We learned how to follow, unfollow, mute and block fellow tweet-

ers. Since Twitter only allows 140 characters, we discussed how to write concise, brief content that conveys information of interest to our desired audience. We discussed how to create mindful posts since we are in a professional setting.

Many of us now follow Professor Bechtel, as well as university accounts such as @EmployeeForum and @unc\_hr. Since the class is in high demand, a second has been scheduled for Nov. 11.

To register for the upcoming session, visit <http://tinyurl.com/>

## inTOUCH

inTouch is a publication of the Employee Forum at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Contributors include Katie Turner (Editor), Tammy Cox, Ronda Manuel, Arlene Medder, Kelli Raker, Charles Streeter

Special thanks to members of the Public Relations and Communications Committee.

Production: The Daily Tar Heel