

# InTouch

## UNC Employee Forum News

Volume 1, Number 4 June 2000

### From the Chair - Joanne Kucharski

It's hard to believe that the official beginning of summer is only days away. A special thank you to the University Managers Association and all volunteers for their hard work in kicking off the season with "Cool Your Heels". It was a great occasion to mingle and catch up with our campus friends.

### Chancellor McCoy Continues His Support on Staff Issues

As you may recall, the Forum adopted adverse weather resolutions in March 2000 in response to the staff's "overwhelming sentiment that a decision be made to reverse the coding of leave time" for the days in January when record snowfalls forced the campus to close. In April, Chancellor McCoy forwarded the Forum's resolutions with his support to President Broad. In May, President Broad sent a request to State Personnel Director Ronald Penny asking him to amend the state's adverse weather policy giving explicit authority to the University to determine if employee work time must be made up when a university is closed due to catastrophic weather conditions. Mr. Penny indicated he would take the proposal under consideration and assigned one of his staff members to work with General Administration to "reach an accord" acceptable to the University, Office of State Personnel, the State Personnel Commission, Office of the Governor and the General Assembly.

### Budget Bites

The beginning of summer also means the beginning of a new fiscal year with a new budget to balance. We are facing the prospect of a 0.5% state budget reduction in FY 2000-2001.

I encourage all staff to think about potential streamlining procedures which might save funds while maintaining the primary mission of your individual department.

Don't be afraid to speak up and introduce that new idea that could potentially have a positive benefit for the campus.

### InTouch: UNC Employee Forum News

*InTouch* is published monthly and covers news from the Forum as well as questions and concerns from the Staff. We hope you enjoy it and find it useful. If you have any questions or comments, please let us know. This newsletter is compiled by the UNC Employee Forum Communications Committee and is edited by Suzan deSerres (sdes@med.unc.edu).

### Stepping Up

Thanks to all staff who stepped forward and responded to the Forum's call for volunteers to serve on a variety of university committees. The forum's University Committee Assignments Committee (UCAC) will meet soon to review the responses and compile a list of recommendations.

It is no easy task to maintain a list of all university committees. If you are aware of a committee that does not currently have staff representation, please notify John Heuer, the current chair of the UCAC.

*For all staff taking that well deserved summer vacation ... the forum delegates wish you all a happy and safe time with lots of fun.*

### Community Meeting: State Health Plan Cost Increases

Many of you have read about prospects for a 50% cost increase next year for the State Health Plan. The UNC Employee Forum has invited Jack Walker, Director of the State Health Plan, to discuss ways the State can meet these increases. Should the State raise premiums or cut services? How should the State structure these changes?

We are working on scheduling Walker to speak at a community meeting to which all employees will be invited to attend on work time. Check your mail or with your Human Resources Facilitator for more details to come. Your input is vital! Send questions or comments for Walker to the Forum Office, CB#3488, or email them to [forum\\_office@unc.edu](mailto:forum_office@unc.edu).

### NC A&T Staff Senators Visit

Six North Carolina A&T University Staff Senators attended the Forum's June 7 meeting, and lunched with members afterward. The A&T Senators came to ask questions and receive advice on the workings of their six-month old Staff Senate (an organization similar to our own UNC Employee Forum). The Forum agreed to maintain contact and wished them the best of luck in their efforts to represent NC A&T staff.

### Bond Issue

The Forum heard an impassioned plea from Vice Chancellor Jack Evans to support the \$3.1 billion University bond issue this November. Evans pointed out that with the presidential and gubernatorial campaigns reaching full volume this fall, attention to the bond issue may be muted. He asked Employees to talk with friends and acquaintances about the bond issue and its benefits to North Carolina: This bond issue will greatly benefit the future economy of our state; A huge amount is at stake; This is our one best shot to get what we need in terms of renovations and construction.

### Your Forum Delegates

are here to help you. Please feel free to contact one of us or the Forum Office if you have comments, questions, or issues for discussion by the Employee Forum.

Delegate	CB#	Phone	Div
Forrest Aiken	1800	2.1145	2
Brenda Ambrose-Fortune	3914	2.0153	1
Chris Barfield	7470	6.7328	6
Terry Barker	7450	6.4451	5
Anita Booth	3914	2.0153	1
Maceo Bullock	1060	2.5014	2
Suzan deSerres	7210	6.8548	8
Deedra Donley	7321	2.8886	5
Kathy Dutton, Vice Chair	1040	2.3895	9
Monisia Farrington	7000	2.3957	7
Linda Ford	7450	6.2731	5
Jeffery Fuchs	3320	2.5695	1
Karen Geer, Secretary	1090	2.9043	6
Dorothy Grant	3385	2.1191	7
Tracey Haith	7400	6.3245	5
John Harris	1800	2.2069	2
Mike Hawkins	3420	2.5390	8
John Heuer	1800	2.9023	7
Dianne Hill	3100	3.9689	4
Tom Jenswold	1800	2.2069	2
Andy Johns	1150	2.5927	8
Karen Jordan	7360	6.3039	5
Ramona Kellam	7455	6.3541	5
Charlotte Kilpatrick	7280	6.0551	5
Joanne Kucharski, Chair	2100	2.6092	8
Ruthie Lawson	1020	2.2591	4
Bobbie Lesane	7471	6.3658	6
Dave Lohse	8600	2.7257	1
Denise Mabe	7585	2.1389	7
Jill Mayer	7585	6.0960	1
John Meeker	7360	2.0031	8
Margaret Moore	7585	2.0703	1
Diana Newton	1045	2.2550	8
Ken Perry	8600	2.7496	2
Lynn Ray	7570	6.4589	7
Cathy Riley	8040	2.7355	7
Rickey Robinson	1800	2.5086	3
JoAnna E. Smith	3490	2.3533	4
Rita Stone	7570	6.5287	5
Cindy Stone	3450	2.2571	8
Sheila Storey	7450	3.7251	9
Darian Sturdivant	1800	2.1086	3
Joanne Terry	3914	2.0171	4
Robert Thoma	1800	2.9026	7
Elaine Tola	3450	2.9434	8
Susan Toppin	3100	2.9269	7

If you would like to make general comments concerning the newsletter or help us identify specific issues or topics to be addressed, please direct them to Matt Banks at the Forum Office or to Suzan deSerres, Chair of the Communications Committee.

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CONTACT US !



# UNC Policy Response: USE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS ON CAMPUS

## ***Why are social security numbers being used as identifiers for health plans on campus?***

*Laurie Charest, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, provides our first answer:*

The University formally stopped using social security numbers as identifiers a few years ago. Today, all Employees have a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that is used as a key for all automated systems at the University. Health insurance, however, is governed by the State, which has not moved forward in this area in the same way. We are working with the State Health Plan and other insurance providers to de-emphasize their use of social security numbers. The State Health Plan has assured us that they can accommodate employees who do not wish to have their social security numbers used. Any employee concerned about this should contact the Benefits Department.

## ***Although all University systems are supposed to be set up to use the PIN, some University systems including travel reimbursements, payroll, and parking, persist in requiring social security numbers. Is anything being done to protect the privacy of students and employees?***

*Bob Dermody, Director of the Departmental Accounting System Team, responded to the question as follows:*

I can address the use of the social security number on the InDEPTH travel documents. In InDEPTH there are two travel documents. The Travel Request is used to obtain approval, encumber funds and request a travel advance in accordance with University regulations. The Travel Expense form is used on the completion of the trip to account for the trip and request reimbursement for trip related disbursements in accordance with University policy.

During the course of implementing the InDEPTH Travel documents at UNC, we became aware of privacy concerns relative to the use of the social security number on travel documents. In April, 1999 Mary Sechriest, Associate University Counsel responded to a request that we made through Dennis Press, University Controller regarding the use of social security numbers in the InDEPTH accounting system. Her response stated, in part: "There are a number of contexts in which information about employer-reimbursed travel may

be necessary for the proper administration of a tax law, and it is mandatory for employees to furnish their Social Security Numbers for such tax purposes. That being the case, I believe it is appropriate that the program for on-line travel form processing retrieve SSN from the payroll database (as well as the other identifying information currently being retrieved) when PID is entered on the on-line form."

Currently, University regulations allow the University to deduct any unpaid advance (from failure to pay or bounced check) from the employee's pay. The University Business Manual states: If the travel advance is not repaid or accounted for, the signed travel authorization authorizes deduction of the advance amount from the employee's salary. If the traveler is no longer employed by the University, the department will be charged for the outstanding travel advance. (source <http://www.ais.unc.edu/busman/tra/trapol6.html>). It is my understanding, that if the department is charged, the University also issues a 1099 at year-end to the traveler in accordance with IRS regulations. In addition, if the traveler does not include original documentation supporting the claimed expenditures, the University has the right to issue a 1099 to the traveler at year-end.

Concurrent with this decision, we began working with the developer of the InDEPTH software to undertake some "shielding" mechanisms. When the traveler information is brought in to the InDEPTH form, the social security information can be seen by the preparer of the document (this departmental person already has access to this information and is necessary to insure we have the correct person, in the case of people with the same first and last names). Once the document leaves the department for electronic approvals, the social security number is "shielded" or grayed out so that individuals approving the document (e.g., Contracts and Grants, Accounting Services, etc.), cannot see that information. The information reappears when it reaches Travel Accounting for processing. Only those people who need to know the information and have authorization see the social security number.

In addition, we have been working with the developer, Travel Accounting and Accounts Payable to eliminate the use of the social security number altogether. In the next release of the production version of InDEPTH, rather than pulling the traveler's name from the employee file, we will be pulling the traveler from the UNC vendor list. The UNC vendor list is used to reimburse employees for expenses they have paid for personally. The departments on InDEPTH (six in production and approximately 20 testing in a test environment), will now include vendor information from the UNC vendor list. This change was made to improve the efficiency of creating a voucher that is used to pay the traveler for approved travel costs and eliminate the social security issue. The employee's vendor identification number ("S" number) will be referenced on the electronic document.

**The UNC Employee Forum is featured in a special insert in the June issue of the University Gazette. Be sure to read yours!**