

InTouch

UNC Employee Forum News

Volume 2, Number 4 May 2001

From the Chair..... John Heuer

Sometimes it is as plain as the nose on your face, but like the emperor's new clothes, not always easy to see. Why would Hurricane Floyd and a couple of adverse legal rulings result in legislative proposals for permanent reductions in state support for higher education?

Why would the legislature mandate an increase in enrollment in UNC System schools and then propose to enact permanent reductions in state support for the UNC system?

Why, when the statewide electorate passed the historic higher education facilities bond by nearly a ¾ majority, would the legislature propose to cut funding which would effectively nullify the initiative?

Will the citizens of North Carolina stand for this? Will we?

Chancellor Moeser, Student Body President Justin Young, and Graduate and Professional Student Association President Mikisha Brown tell us that we need to hold our ground. When I introduced a resolution for adequate funding for the University at our May 2nd Forum meeting, Forum delegates elected to replace the language about the severity of proposed budget cuts with an acclamation that ANY cuts in University funding would cause irreparable damage to our University.

Faculty Council Chair Sue Estroff tells us that we need to fine-tune our sense of the absurd when we contemplate these contradictions. She's right, of course. A healthy appreciation of the absurd is one strategy that we can employ to maintain our equilibrium. Another opportunity we have is to recognize that the act of "circling our wagons" can bring us closer together as a community. Faculty, staff, students and administrators, we need to meet this challenge together.

InTouch: UNC Employee Forum News is published ten times per year and covers news from the Forum as well as questions and concerns from the Staff. This newsletter is compiled by the UNC Employee Forum Communications Committee and is edited by Suzan deSerres. We hope you enjoy it and find it useful. 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 (sdes@med.unc.edu).

Chancellor Moeser, Dana Cope Address May Forum Meeting

Wednesday, May 2, the Employee Forum heard from Chancellor James Moeser and State Employees' Association of North Carolina (SEANC) Director Dana Cope on the subject of the upcoming legislative budget negotiations.

Moeser emphasized that the reported bad news about the University's budget situation had not yet been officially enacted; the news rather had come from a joint legislative appropriations committee. However, Moeser said that the University had arrived at a critical moment, and said that it was incumbent that University employees and students rally support for the future of higher education in North Carolina. Moeser said that employees should know that if the current cuts are enacted, they would be utterly devastating to the University's mission and would do "irreparable damage." Moeser noted the waves of successive cuts that the University had absorbed over the past decade. He hoped that legislative leaders would find the political courage to identify new sources of revenue to spare the University's recurring budgets.

Moeser also noted recent progress towards an agreement with the Town of Chapel Hill that would provide lower-income employee housing in the heart of downtown.

Cope spoke about the role of SEANC as a lobbying organization on behalf of State employees. He said that it was wrong and immoral that the State of North Carolina does not find money to fund adequately its employees' pay and benefits. He also criticized the tendency of legislative leaders to make employees suffer so that the State's budget can be balanced each year. Cope said that his appointment marked SEANC's choice to take a more active stance in the annual legislative negotiations.

Cope said that SEANC stood behind the University and its employees fully in the current budget negotiations, and said that it would not let the State cut one position without raising a fuss. He decried the poor planning of both parties that put the State into this budgetary mess this year. Cope encouraged employees to take vacation leave to attend the annual SEANC rally in Raleigh May 16.

No Transit Fee For 2001-2002

The Forum wants to take this opportunity to say **Thank-You to the Transportation & Parking Advisory Committee (TPAC)**, for all of their hard work this past year, and for their success in keeping the transit fee away from our paychecks in the 2001-2002 fiscal year!

"The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual."
Vince Lombardi

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	Phone	CB#	Div
Chris Barfield	6-7328	7470	6
GeorgeAnn Bissett	2-1236	3480	1
Anita Booth	2-0153	3914	1
Keita Cannon	3-8217	1150	8
Andy Chrismon	2-1633	8700	2
David Collins	6-9254	7235	5
Linda Collins	6-0957	7585	1
Lisa Croucher	2-9435	3450	8
Suzan deSerres	6-8548	7210	8
Sue Dodson	3-6791	3210	6
Lee Edmark	6-5745	1830	8
Keith Fogleman	2-3962	1800	3
Jeffrey Fuchs	2-5695	3320	1
Pam Griffin	6-8960	7520	7
Tracey Haith	6-3245	7400	5
Glenn Haugh	2-5566	1110	7
John Heuer	2-9023	1800	7
Tom Jenswold	2-2069	1800	2
Fred Jordan	2-1765	3175	7
Karen Jordan	6-3039	7360	5
Ramona Kellam	6-3541	7455	5
Gary Lloyd	2-9857	2100	7
Barbara Logue	2-6095	3290	4
Connie McPherson	2-7145	1600	8
John Meeker	2-0031	7360	8
Jo Parker	6-2736	7450	5
Clarence Peoples	2-3962	1800	3
Gail Plaisance	2-7081	7455	5
Tom Rhyne	2-4165	1800	2
Cathy Riley	2-7355	8040	7
Wendy Riley	2-5762	1250	8
Frieda Rosenberg	2-2050	3914	1
Rob Sadler	2-2069	1800	2
Sheila Storey	3-7251	7520	9
Diane Strong	2-2287	3420	6
Darian Sturdivant	2-1086	1800	3
Bonita Summers	2-7693	3380	4
Kay Teague	6-3693	7050	5
Joanne Terry	2-0171	3914	4
Robert Thoma	2-9026	1800	7
Elaine Tola	2-9434	3450	8
Mary Ann Vacheron	2-4417	3380	4
Chanetta Washington	6-0355	3411	8
Betty Waynick	2-9692	3914	1
Sylvia White	2-9276	3100	9

2001 Forum Officers:

Forum Chair John E. Heuer
 Forum Vice Chair Sheila Storey
 Forum Secretary Tracey Haith

Forum Assistant:

Matt Banks 2-3779 3488

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
THE EMPLOYEE FORUM
 Campus Box 3488
 200A Carr Building
 Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3488
 Telephone: 919-962-3779
 Fax: 919-962-1341
 forum_office@unc.edu
 http://www.unc.edu/staff/forum



POLICY RESPONSE

MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD

Reading all of the news about possible budget cuts to the University and to the State health plan, you might wonder what you can do to make your voice heard. The University has made it easy for people to contact members of the General Assembly, by accessing the "Helpful Links" section of the Government Relations page, at <http://www.unc.edu/govrel/helplinks.html>. Select the "How to Find Your State Legislator" link. (Employees without access to the Internet can call 962-4272 for an electronic or paper list of legislators.) These are some points to keep in mind when contacting legislators:

First, never use University time, resources or materials when contacting the Legislature. In particular, don't use office letterhead or departmental computers for this purpose. As a UNC employee, you are expected to use University resources for the State's business; contacting the Legislature is something you should do only as a citizen, in your free time. Using University resources makes you look unprofessional and could get you into trouble. So, don't do it!

Second, when contacting legislators, a hand-written message or typed letter has more impact than an e-mailed note. Legislators know that a matter is really important to the constituent when one takes the trouble to write personally.

Third, address your letter properly. The front of the envelope should read:

The Honorable (Senator's or Representative's name)
North Carolina General Assembly
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

In the letter, address the legislator as "Dear Senator (last name)" or "Dear Representative (last name)."

Fourth, identify yourself. Tell the legislator who you are and where you live. Explain that you are a University and State employee, your work position and location, and mention if you are a member of SEANC. Date your letter and remember to include a return address.

Fifth, keep it short and specific. Explain why you are writing, noting the particular issue and the bill number and title if you know them. State your views on the subject, sharing how the bill will affect

you, your family, those you know and the University. Put it in personal terms and try to keep it to one page or less.

Sixth, be polite and positive. Don't threaten; instead, let them know how you feel. Thank them for their time and consideration. If the legislator responds to your letter or, better yet, supports your position, convey your thanks. Write another letter indicating your appreciation for their response and/or support.

Seventh, share your letter with someone else to make sure your handwriting is legible, your grammar is correct and your point is clear. It's always good to double-check.

(Adapted from a SEANC District 25 document)

Sample Letter to Legislator

Date _____

Your Address
Street
City, North Carolina Zip Code

The Honorable _____
North Carolina General Assembly
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

Dear Representative or Senator _____:

I am writing in reference to _____ (*bill number, short title, or issue*).

I am a State Employee and I am a resident of your House/Senate district. I urge you to _____ (*support, oppose, amend or draft legislation*).

For the following reasons _____ (*facts or anecdotal reasons for your position, including how this bill would affect you*).

I appreciate your time, consideration and support of University and State Employee issues.

Sincerely,

(*Your Name*)

**Employee Appreciation Event, Wednesday, May 23, 2-4pm, Carmichael Auditorium!
Carnival games! Massage tables! Ice cream! Lots of great prize awards!**

Be sure to bring your UNC One Card for admission and to register for prizes. We still need volunteers! Contact Joanne Kucharski (jkuchars@email.unc.edu). Thanks to the University Managers' Association for organizing this event!