All College Staff Development Day – Professional Development

WHEN    Thursday, May 13
WHERE   Hill Theater
TIME     8 AM

HIGHLIGHTS


Breakout Sessions

Morning
- Disruptive Student Policy
- Team Building
- Sabbatical Presentations

Afternoon
- RCTC First Annual Office Olympics
- Delco
- Educational Technology Camp

Look for a full schedule of events in a future College Crossings!

Mark Your Calendars!

Retirement Reception
Thursday - May 6, 2004 - 2:00-4:00pm - CF206/208
(Brief program at 2:30pm)

Please join us as we recognize our retirees' many years of dedication to RCTC and our students.

Weekly Stakeholder and Market Fact

The 2003 Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) groups items into twelve categories. The category of Campus Climate includes fifteen survey items measuring helpfulness, approachability, overall experience and how welcoming the campus is to students. The college's overall satisfaction rating last year for the Campus Climate category was 4.87 on a seven point scale, with seven being very satisfied. This compares to the 2003 national norm of 5.21.
Weekly Funny

You make me SICK!

When germ relationships go bad

National Library Week

First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country each April. It is a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation’s libraries and librarians and to promote library use and support.

In support of our library patrons, Goddard Library is giving away a signed copy of “Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich. Interested participants must complete the National Library Week Trivia Questionnaire located on the library homepage by Thursday April 22, 2004. (Click on National Library Week). A lucky winner will be drawn at random on Friday, April 23, 2004.

Good Luck and Stop by to see the new displays for National Library Week!

Bookstore Contest!

Visit the RCTC Bookstore now through 4:00 pm on May 7th for your chance to win!! Guess the correct number of pieces of candy in the jar and win an RCTC sweatshirt!

Board Policy Changes/Additions

Proposed Board Policy changes/additions have been proposed. Please review the documents attached to this week’s Crossings with your constituents and forward any questions/concerns to the appropriate RCTC Leadership Council member. To view all current MnSCU and RCTC Policies, please visit: http://www.rtc.edu/policies/

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Carrie & Fred Schliep on the birth of their daughter, Hailey Lyn. She arrived at 2:23 am on April 16th and weighed in at 9 lbs 11 oz and was 20 1/2 inches long.

We are also delighted to announce the arrival of Ethan James Williams to the proud parents of Jim and Lynn Williams. Ethan weighed in at 9 lbs 1 oz, and was 21 1/2 inches long.
Supalla’s Scribblings

With the Easter/Passover break over, action at the Legislature continues to churn. Many conversations continue behind the scenes as the May 17 statutory adjournment date looms just a month away. Agencies are eagerly awaiting the capital bonding recommendations from the Capital Investment Committees. Informally, we have been told that the UCR Health Sciences project continues to get favorable responses. If you haven’t weighed in on the local sales tax extension, I beg you to call, e-mail or write House legislators today…time is running out on your ability to influence representatives on this important UCR initiative. Use the information sent out in an e-mail a couple of weeks ago and urge the House to approve the sales tax request.

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) has evaluated Small Business Development Center proposals and selected RCTC as the choice of the southeastern Minnesota regional SBDC through 2007. Over the past 15 years DEED and RCTC have successfully partnered to provide confidential high quality professional business consulting and training to thousands of entrepreneurs and business owners throughout southeastern Minnesota. Since January 1, 2000, the RCTC SBDC has:

- Delivered 13,821 hours of counseling to 1,016 entrepreneurs and business owners
- Assisted 104 business owners access over $18,075,000 in financing for operation and expansion
- Sponsored or cosponsored 61 professional development training conferences
- Contributed in the creation and retention of 10,684 state jobs
- Demonstrated that RCTC is the leader in providing southeastern Minnesota with high quality, high impact technical business assistance

These milestones are a reflection of the commitment to the SBDC program by Michelle Pyfferoen, Regional Director, and the entire SBDC team! Congratulations on earning this important program extension.

Did you see the CAD Program recognition in the “senior time” column in the Post-Bulletin? We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Rochester Community and Technical College computer assisted design technology class for adding the lettering to the van. A $3,000 donation from the Rochester Exchange Club made the purchase of a newer van possible. So, when you see the burgundy “MEALS TO HEAD START” van on the streets, check out the beautiful white lettering. Many thanks to Pam Benson and the CAD students for this great community service project.

What a pleasure it was to join three RCTC PTK students and Advisor Barb Mollberg during the Phi Theta Kappa International Convention held in Minneapolis. Barb and I had lunch with Dick Clark before he keynoted a rousing afternoon general session, “The Influence of Music and Television on American Culture.” Mr. Clark’s presentation was a kick-off for PTK’s 2004-06 Honors Study Topic, “Popular Culture: Shaping and Reflecting Who We Are.” I was very proud of our chapter representatives, who joined more than 3400 PTK reps from around the world. Yep…Dick Clark looks as good in person as he does on TV. Thanks, Barb!

The MnSCU System is leading a frontline effort to solve a statewide health care worker shortage that experts say will create a need for more than 13,000 new nurses by 2010 in Minnesota. The number of students enrolled in nursing in fall 2003 increased 16 percent over fall 2002. A system survey showed more than 7,100 students enrolled in licensed practical nursing and registered nursing programs. The MnSCU system educates more than 78 percent of the state’s new nursing graduates and 63 percent of its non-nursing health care graduates. Eighty-seven percent of colleges and universities offer nursing programs; 92 percent offer non-nursing health-related programs. Last year, MnSCU institutions graduated 1,175 nurses. RCTC’s high quality nursing programs are a significant contributor of health care graduates who serve Minnesota patients.

Thought for the week…”Life asks us to make measurable progress in reasonable time. That’s why they make those fourth grade chairs so small. So students won’t fit in them at twenty-five!” -- Jim Rohn

From my vantage point…RCTC employees make measurable progress in record time! Don
Rochester Community and Technical College
AFSCME Labor/Management
Minutes for Tuesday, March 23, 2004 – 11:00 a.m. – AT109

Present: Administration: Arntson, Hansmann, Mercer, Supalla
AFSCME: Clark, Conway, Edwardy, Kiehne, Lunning, Martin (Business Agent), O’Dea, Tucker
Recorder: Judy Kingsbury

ITEM 3 (AFSCME) Minutes of February 9, 2004 AFSCME Labor/Management Meeting – Martin requested clarification on the statement in the February meeting minutes which stated “there would be no representatives from AFSCME serving on several searches including student services assistant, . . .” Arntson responded she believed the statement was made because there were no volunteers from AFSCME to serve on the searches, and not because AFSCME did not want to be represented. Martin clarified that AFSCME representatives do not sit on search committees for AFSCME positions because of a conflict of interest, however Administration may appoint AFSCME employees to represent departments.  
Action: The minutes from the February 9th meeting were changed as follows: Martin announced there would be no representatives from AFSCME serving on several of the searches, including the student services assistant search.  Action: Information Only.

ITEM 1 (AFSCME) Summer Staffing (4-10 hour days) and ITEM 1 (Admin) Alternate Schedule – Hansmann announced the GMWs submitted an alternate schedule (reviewed by the supervisors) and a meeting is scheduled next week to announce the proposals approved by Administration. Hansmann noted some requests would result in pay shift differential expenses and will not be approved. The loading dock employee alternate schedule may only be approved for the first half of the summer due to the number of book shipments received in late-summer. Hansmann expressed her appreciation to all maintenance employees for working together on the alternate schedules, and requested the employees abide by the summer schedules and not flex time, which may result in inadequate staffing. Martin thanked Supalla and Hansmann for allowing employees to submit proposals for consideration.  Action: Hansmann will meet with the maintenance department to announce those alternate schedules approved.

ITEM 4 (AFSCME) Leave Without Pay - Kiehne questioned if there would be any leave savings during the summer. Hansmann announced a couple of employees from the Business Office submitted requests, but the requests may be denied because the absences may require the hiring of a replacement. Kiehne question if a new hire was required with last year’s request in the mailroom. Hansmann responded no hire was made last year because of the back-up process in place, however with the implementation of an on-line bookstore, the previous back-up will not be available. Martin questioned if another employee (out-side of Hansmann’s department) could be assigned to back-up.  Action: Supalla will discuss the mailroom request at the next RCTC Leadership Cabinet meeting to see if there is available back-up in another department.

ITEM 2 (AFSCME) Fitness Center – Kiehne announce the recent ECHO article insinuated all employees would be assessed a $30/semester fitness center fee. Hansmann clarified only those employees using the fitness center would be assessed the fee. Kiehne requested a schedule be posted so employees and students are aware of when the fitness center is available. Hansmann indicated the fitness center is open to eligible students/faculty/staff even when athletic teams are using the center, but is not available when classes are scheduled, and will ensure a schedule is posted at the entrance. Supalla announced the faculty are requesting the Wellness Center budget be used to off-set the $30/semester rate, noting faculty feel they are being assessed too many fees and the College should be more proactive and use more preventative initiatives to ensure healthy employees. Martin responded if you calculated the $30/semester fee per day, the rate of 40-50 cents per day is very reasonable, adding the College may want to investigate health plan programs to off-set costs. Martin indicated he thought the Health Partners Plan currently has a program to promote fitness.  Action: AFSCME supports the Fitness Center Fee Proposal and encourages Administration to further investigate plans through the health programs for state employees.

ITEM 5 (AFSCME) Flags on Campus – Martin indicated he believed the concerns with the flags in classrooms at Winona State University originated with the request to have plaques on the flag cases identifying donors. Martin added AFSCME supports the placement of American Flags in classrooms, however has concerns with the expansion of any request that may result in political issues beyond just the placement of the American Flags (donated by plaques, non-US flags, etc.) Supalla responded he was not aware of the other issues, but thought the concerns were raised because the decision to place the flags in classrooms was made without contractual meet and confer discussions.  Action: Information Only.
ITEM 3 (Admin) Work Assignments – Hansmann announced she planned to visit with the maintenance department to clarify the process for resolving work assignment concerns (which, as outlined in previous AFSCME Labor/Management Meeting Minutes, states employee first discuss the issue with the immediate supervisor and forward any non-resolved issue to Hansmann and Martin for final resolution). Martin concurred with the process clarification. Hansmann added it was her intent to have the supervisors walk-through the work load with the employee to obtain a better understanding of the concerns. Martin agreed with Hansmann’s philosophy, noting everyone has a different level of doing things, but a walk-through of the area may provide a better understanding. Action: Hansmann will clarify the work assignment process with the maintenance department at the next staff meetings.

ITEM 4 (Admin) FY05 Budget – Hansmann announced the FY05 budget process will begin with an integrated procedure which requires each department to evaluate their accomplishments and develop continuous improvement plans that dictate how the plan aligns with the College goals. Martin questioned how AFSCME employees fit into the process, and Hansmann responded her intent is to have each department prepare their continuous improvement plans at staff (departmental) meetings. Martin encouraged Administration to obtain appropriate feedback from staff (whether at staff meetings or individually) to ensure appropriate input. Tucker acknowledged the regular maintenance staff meetings have provided a positive opportunity for employees to share input and exchange ideas. Kiehne questioned if there would be a reporting process for the inputs submitted. Hansmann concurred that all continuous improvement plans will be available for viewing through the website. Action: Information Only.

ITEM 6 (AFSCME) Timesheet Update – Martin questioned the status of the electronic timesheet process. Arntson responded electronic timesheets (completed via the computer, printed, signed, and forwarded to HR) has been working well, and recently leave slip template forms have been placed on computers. Martin announced the Chancellor has announced he plans to investigate electronic signatures for timesheets and implementation of a system-wide timesheet. Arntson wasn’t aware of the timelines for a system-wide implementation, hence acknowledged the temporary process at the College will continue until a system-wide implementation occurs. Kiehne indicated, prior to merger, the former technical college timesheet process was exception time reporting. Arntson responded exception time reporting is not an option for AFSCME employees. Action: Information Only.

ITEM 5 (Admin) Winter Break Closing 04-05 – Supalla announced initial consideration was made to close the UCR Campus December 22, 2004 through January 2, 2005, however, because WSU-RC and UMR classes run through December 23, the campus closing proposal has been modified to close the buildings (with the exception of the Sports Center) from midnight on December 23, 2004 through January 2, 2005. Supalla and Hansmann announced employees will have the opportunity to use vacation, comp time, leave without pay, and floating holidays during their absence, adding work will be available for those employees that choose to work (not necessarily in their regular assignment). Although the campus doors will be locked and the security system activated, employees may obtain a security code to access the facilities, keeping in mind the heat will be lowered and snow removal will only be done for emergency vehicles. Martin announced no concerns were raised through the Union, specifically through the stewards, for the closing in 2003-04. Kiehne added the only concern raised was the fact some employees would rather close/use vacation in the summer months. Action: The Winter Break Closing item will remain on the agenda for further clarification on deadlines. During the interim, Administration will begin notifying employees of the intent to close the UCR Campus December 24, 2004 through January 2, 2005.

ITEM 6 (Admin) Ergonomics – Arntson shared her initiative to be proactive in evaluating workstations for ergonomic issues, adding the process would be handled through the Facilities, Grounds, Safety and Security Committee (FGSSC) as well as Information Technology employees responsible for setting up computer workstations. Kiehne responded a group of employees were trained several years ago, and did evaluated workstations at the time, but due to the lack of appropriate funding the issues were not resolved. Martin commended Arntson for the initiative, and encouraged a tracking mechanism to ensure issues that lack funding at the current time be given temporary relief in the interim. Arntson added a check list for new employees will also be implemented in the orientation process, as well as a process for office moves. Tucker agreed moves often do result in the need for ergonomic alterations. Martin shared his concern that a major task like ergonomic training and monitoring be handled by the FGSSC, questioning if a smaller task force may be more appropriate. Arntson responded she felt it was the role and responsibility of the safety committee to handle ergonomics, adding both staff development funding and possible grant money may be available for training. ACTION: Arntson will investigate possible grant funding for ergonomics.
ITEM 7 (Admin) President’s Day & Veteran’s Day Holiday Agreement – Arntson distributed Memorandum of Understanding language that may be used for a holiday exchange for President’s Day and Veteran’s Day. Specifically, the MOU would provide the option for employees to take the holiday or work the holiday and credit the hours worked to either vacation or compensatory time balances. Martin questioned why the holiday switch language isn’t being used. Supalla responded the MOU proposal appears to be a win-win situation providing more flexibility for the employees and reducing administrative tracking issues adding, however, he was open to suggestions. Martin agreed the concept appears to be employee friendly. Action: Arntson will prepare the document in a Memorandum of Understanding format, and Martin will share the MOU with the AFSCME Executive Board and report back to Administration next month. If the MOU is supported, language will reflect that the MOU may be cancelled by either party with a 30-day notice.

ITEM 8 (Admin) Experience Works – Hansmann forwarded the position description to Martin for review. Arntson added she was unaware of any laws or provision outlining the acceptance of work from another organization for compensation of space as long as there is no displacement of a current employee. Hansmann added the individual is not volunteering, but rather being paid by another organization, while RCTC provides the training site for the experience. Martin questioned if it was similar to welfare to work, and Arntson responded the College was not just a training site, but rather the individual(s) are working for the organization in exchange for rent paid to the College. O’Dea added the arrangement appears to be one using a “barter” system. Martin reiterated AFSCME’s position that such an arrangement needs to be reviewed and supported by AFSCME. Arntson repeated her position that the College is not displacing any workers. O’Dea indicated a “sign-off” has generally been initiated and required by the training agency. Martin added AFSCME appears to agree with Administration’s position, but the process isn’t being followed appropriately (telling us nobody is displaced rather than having AFSCME review and agree). Hansmann announced the individual from Experience Works has since left the position, but another individual will be replacing her. Supalla questioned what the content of a letter/agreement should include. Martin responded the letter should identify the arrangement does not result in a layoff and needs to be signed by the local AFSCME 4001 Executive Board. Martin added the letter should be very specific, outlining the need for training with the cost associated with the rental and training agreement, and reflecting no cost to the College and no displacement of AFSCME workers. Action: Hansmann and Arntson will prepare the letter outlining the arrangement with Experience Works and forward to Martin for consideration by the Local 4001 Executive Board.

ITEM 9 (Admin) Official Employee Communication Tool – Supalla announced a policy was approved and implemented last year enforcing e-mail as an official communication mechanism for students. Due to recent problems with the collection of parking fees from staff (specifically adjunct faculty), Supalla proposed e-mail also be implemented as an official communication tool for employees. O’Dea responded the problem may be that some employees still do not have accounts on the server, or have not had adequate training on the program. Martin noted if 80% of the employees have accounts and training, then alternative arrangements could be made for the remaining 20%, with the main focus on providing the best tool for communicating. Hansmann agreed, noting maintenance supervisors currently print and post e-mail messages that need to be read by all employees. Martin suggested the implementation of e-mail as an official communication tool be done as a pilot project and re-evaluated at the end of six months, adding if the process doesn’t work, then maybe the issue isn’t e-mail. Arntson agreed the notification of e-mail as a tool of communicating needs to be stressed stronger during new employee orientation sessions. Action: AFSCME supports the implementation of e-mail as an official communication tool in a pilot project for review after six months.

Adjourned at 12:55 pm

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, May 20, 2004 – 11:00 a.m. – AT109