

# RIT STAFF COUNCIL

UPDATE - FEBRUARY 1998

## Important Updates

*The following is a summary of the discussion between Dr. James Watters, VP for Finance & Administration, and Staff Council on January 29, 1998. RSC is appreciative of his willingness to discuss issues, and his candor and sincerity.*

### HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR SEARCH

Dr. Watters chairs the search committee. Although there is pressure to get someone into this position quickly, Dr. Watters restated his commitment to find the best person - someone with leadership and vision. The Search Committee will take whatever time is needed to do so. Meanwhile, the department is moving ahead on many issues even as the search continues.

### STAFF COMPENSATION

The new compensation plan made a shift from internal to external comparisons for determining compensation. For non-exempt staff, data is obtained from the Industrial Management Council (IMC) of the Rochester area. Right now, RIT Human Resources is in the process of verifying that information, then comparing it to our staff to determine if or why the pay is or is not fair. For exempt staff the list of CAC (Compensation Advisory Committee) schools was used for comparison. However, this list worked well for faculty comparison, but it is not appropriate for staff comparisons. Therefore, a new list of 30 schools was developed with schools that more closely reflect RIT in number of students housed, budget size, etc. For those positions that cannot be benchmarked, because there are not comparable positions at the other schools, RIT will look at internal factors to determine where those positions should fall.

RIT has re-engaged Mercer Associates to collect all of the external data which will be used to see where staff fall in comparison to the benchmarked ranges. RIT needs to determine how to get staff into their range, and then how best to move them along within their range. RIT also needs to communicate the results to all staff. The timeline for the steps described for staff compensation is: non-exempt positions should be benchmarked by the end of February; exempt positions by the beginning of April; by mid-March the Vice Presidents should come to consensus concerning the goals; and results should be communicated in April.

A pool for staff equity adjustments is being planned for this year. RIT will likely do a "second phase" for equity adjustments incorporating all the new information. The annual merit adjustments will take place as they normally do.

An RSC rep stated that people feel that responsibilities were added after managed attrition, but compensation was not. When Staff continue to hear the phrase: "We're working on it.", they tend to feel their efforts are not being addressed or they feel discouraged. Staff need to feel that this is a priority. Dr. Watters confirmed that it is a priority to him and to the Finance Committee.

Compensation is an on-going process. There is no endpoint. RIT is striving to get its people where they should be and keep the Institute solvent. We need to work together to make that happen in an ever-changing environment.

Dr. Simone commented that we now have the funds available and are committed to doing what's right. We are working to find the "how".

### TRAINING

The new Discrimination & Harassment Policy and Procedures was the first subject for the new training program. However, when a case recently tested the new policy, some holes were found in it. Training in this area had to be postponed until the procedures could be revised and the problems remedied.

Other training initiatives under development are:

- ORACLE - payroll, budget, requisitioning, etc. will be on-line when the new software is in place later this year. Gerry Curwin is working with the Oracle team to develop a time-line for training for the entire campus and to determine the best entity to deliver that training.

- DEAF AWARENESS - Gerry Curwin is working with people from NTID to develop a program for this

- DESKTOP APPLICATIONS - Information Systems & Computing (ISC), Educational Technology Center (ETC), and Wallace Library are working together to develop training in software applications by appointment in a department/office.

- NEW & TRANSFER EMPLOYEE TRAINING - A committee is developing this program.

- FIRST-TIME MANAGER TRAINING - as well as manager update training are also being developed.

The staff training proposal had a \$300,000 price tag which included new positions. Those new positions were not approved. Instead, RIT will re-allocate existing resources, and use money to hire people for specific instruction. We have budgeted \$100,000 in this year's budget to begin funding staff training.

# RESOLUTION OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FACULTY (EDF) ISSUE

*The following is a summary of Dr. Simone's memo dated January 12, 1998*

Since the creation of the RIT Strategic Plan, a goal has been set to resolve the issues regarding the Educational Development Faculty. After many years of work without coming to a campus-wide consensus of a perfect solution, President Simone has decided to make the following changes effective immediately. (A copy of this resolution is available at the RSC Office - SAU-A450.)

- The English Language Institute (ELI) and the Learning Development Center (LDC) will retain their EDF status and continue to hire individuals with EDF status.
- The EDF nomenclature will remain since it already is well established.
- Individuals who currently hold EDF status in organizational units other than ELI or LDC will retain that title as long as they remain at RIT. They may elect to change their status to that of professional staff at any time. Individuals hired into these units (i.e., units other than ELI or LDC) in the future will be classified as professional staff.
- In the spirit of "grandparenting" affected individuals will retain certain benefits that have always been associated with their being EDF:

- Opportunity for promotion in rank.
- Eligibility for productivity grants.
- Eligibility for professional development leaves.

President Simone stated that these decisions were based on RIT's core mission and the activities of the ELI and LCD.

Unjustifiable differences in working conditions between individuals classified as EDF and staff that have arisen over the years will be resolved as follows:

- "Career Ladders" for appropriate non-EDF staff will be established.
- The two promotion tracks for EDF will be eliminated. Only promotion in rank will be retained.
- Appropriate career development opportunities (e.g. access to productivity grants) for appropriate non-EDF professional staff will be established.
- EDF will be included in the staff evaluation and compensation structure, not the faculty FEAD and compensation structure.
- Grandparented EDF will be represented on Staff Council rather than the Academic Senate.

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## FROM THE RSC CHAIR:

Here we are moving through another Rochester winter. We are half way through the academic year and many of us are yearning for the return to warmer weather in the spring. It seems a long way off, but it will be here before we know it. In much the same way, elections of Staff Council representatives will be upon us before we know it, and it is not too soon to begin thinking about it.

Your Staff Council, through the efforts of many people, has become a key player in the governance process on the campus. From issues that are very important to staff (Staff Awards Program) to participation in shaping critical strategies impacting the campus community (such as the Student Alcohol Policy and the Intellectual Property Policy), the RSC continues to stay true to the goals of the people who created its vision. The future of the RSC, however, depends on people like you to make a commitment to participate in this important work.

Please give some thought to joining Staff Council when the nomination process begins in February. Who is qualified to serve as a representative? Any staff member who believes in the mission of RIT and believes in the role of staff in attaining those goals. Time commitments are flexible and most people should be able to work it into their schedules. I can tell you from personal experience that

as a representative you will derive a great deal of satisfaction and pride from your participation in such an important endeavor.

If you would like more information, please get in touch with a current representative. Keep an eye out for notices of the nomination process. RIT needs you!

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

The RSC wants to recognize the staff that had to work on January 2nd due to their job responsibilities, especially the people who came in to distribute paychecks!

### THANKS, M.R.S.!

A special thank you to Hilliary Dunn and the staff at M.R.S. for the publication and distribution of The Update. Their unselfish donation of time, energy and expertise is gratefully appreciated!