

**To:** Joyce McConnell, President Colorado State University  
Lynn Johnson, Vice President for University Operations  
Robyn Fergus, Executive Director of Human Resources



**CLASSIFIED  
PERSONNEL COUNCIL**  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

**From:** Meg Skeeahan, Chair, Classified Personnel Council

**Date:** September 8, 2020

**Re:** FY20 Annual Report – Classified Personnel Council

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The Colorado State University Classified Personnel Council (CPC) was proud to contribute to the continued practice of shared governance at CSU during FY20. This summary report is intended to highlight the FY20 CPC activities and accomplishments.

**About the Council:**

Representing ~1,800 State Classified employees, the Council began FY20 with a membership of 25 representatives, and three ex-officio members: Bob Schur, Executive Director – Policy, Risk & Environmental Programs, Robyn Fergus – Executive Director of Human Resources, and Diana Prieto, Associate Vice President for Human Capital and Chief Human Resource Officer. CPC representatives and volunteers came from 14 different university departments including: ACNS, Business & Financial Services, the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Business, the CSU Police Department, CVMBS, EHS, Facilities Management, Housing & Dining (Operations Management), the Health Network, the LSC, Statistics, the Access Center, VP for Enrollment and Access, and the VP for Diversity office. By the end of FY20, our Council gained one member, Alisha Zmuda took on a partial term that was vacant. Ending our year at 26 full CPC members.

The Council met throughout the year, beginning in July 2019 with our Annual Retreat at Tamasag, and held 12 regular monthly meetings. A record of meeting minutes can be found at <http://cpc.colostate.edu/council-meetings>. The Council co-hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Employee Appreciation Event, offered and participated in and planned new and continuing outreach events and worked to reach out to the campus community through small group presentations led by Meg Skeeahan.

The most challenging part of the FY20 year was the impacts to the CSU, Fort Collins, Colorado, and our global community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our council continued to meet over Microsoft Teams, and held our last 3 regular meetings virtually. Looking ahead in FY21, we know there will be new challenges to address, however we are committed to navigating those as we move forward.

### **CPC Committees:**

Much of the work and the many contributions of CPC representatives happens through participation in committees. The CPC has five standing committees: Communications, Employee Engagement and Experience, Employee Recognition, Legislative, and the Executive.

The CSU practice of shared governance additionally allows CPC representatives to serve on many University committees, initiatives, and ad hoc groups – serving the interests and as the voice of our State Classified colleagues. In total, CPC representatives served on 30 University committees.

### **Communications:**

The Communications Committee is charged with developing ways to disseminate information about the Council and pertinent information to State Classified employees. For FY20, the committee was Chaired by Leah Bosch and Vice-chair was Laura Snowwhite. The committee met eleven times and conducted a majority of work via email. Accomplishments for FY20 included:

- Seven issues of the CPC Communicator were sent to 450+ self-subscribed campus employees – highlighting important campus opportunities, news, and events
  - The CPC Communicator format was also reimaged by Magdeline Hall and Rachel McKinney
- CSU Life – seven articles about CPC and issues relevant to State Classified employees. These articles were also published in the SOURCE
- SOURCE – eight additional articles authored/co-authored by committee members (and/or external relations staff) about CPC and our Council activities in FY20
- The CPC Website was given a update and refresh for organization and overall accessibility, thanks to Rachel McKinney for her time on this project

At the core of CPC communications and transparency is our website: <http://cpc.colostate.edu>. Many thanks go to Rachel McKinney, for serving as our webmaster.

### **Employee Engagement and Experience:**

The Employee Engagement and Experience Committee researches, suggests, plans, executes, evaluates and reviews Council outreach events, and the Council's involvement with University events and service projects that increase the visibility of the Council to State Classified employees and enhance the employee experience at CSU; Chair Kelly Hixson and Vice-



chair Maria De Lourdes Zavala:

- Work Life Event – the first of its kind fair was organized and planned by the EEE committee, C2C, and CARES primarily. There was significant support from CPC, Lynn Johnson, VPUO, as well as the CSU Provosts office to help off-set the expenses of this event, final expenses were \$2,845. There were 27 tables at the event, including internal CSU and external community tables, including tables that addressed: health and wellness, policy and HR/OEO, housing and utilities, community resources, bike repair, spiritual care, Council representatives, PERA, financial services, and even massages. The event was held outside in the plaza next to the LSC and was well attended despite some marketing and communications issues. However, as August in Colorado goes, poor weather rolled in and ended the event early due lightning. The hope is to hold this event again in the future.
- School is Cool volunteering – supported recruiting volunteers for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual School is Cool event at CSU, a community outreach effort that provides backpacks and supplies to K-12 students in Fort Collins, Wellington, LaPorte, Timnath and outlying mountain schools. Over 2,614 students in 47 schools received support from School is cool in 2019.
- Employee Appreciation Day – helped get volunteers scheduled for the CPC info table, also collected raffle tickets for football game tickets.
  - This event is rooted in an Employee Appreciation Event first organized in 2010 by CPC, which was hosted in the Trial Garden by the University Center of the Arts. Starting in 2016, the CPC Employee Appreciation Event was merged with a community Ice Cream Social (which was also the same day as a Lagoon Concert Series), partnering with CSU Events. Over the next 3 years, this event had grown thanks to the collaboration of CSU Events, APC, CPC, FC and the Employee Appreciation Board, in addition to the generous funding from the Vice President of University Operations, Lynn Johnson.
- Financial Education partnership with Canvas Credit Union – this was facilitated by Meg Skeehan, Chair of CPC, but will transition to the EEE committee in FY21
- The committee had been working on getting out to the different departments presenting about CPC for member recruitment and general knowledge sharing – Meg Skeehan made the most contacts and presented to: College of Liberal Arts Administrative Team, Natural Sciences Administrative Team, Housing and Dining Services – Dining supervisors
- Housing and Dining Resource Fair – January 7<sup>th</sup> in Ingersoll Hall, organized volunteers for the information table
- Housing & Dining’s January Training – Meg Skeehan, Wayne Hall and Jim Abraham presented on CPC updates and purpose at Durrell Dining Center
- Worked on assessing and collecting resources for employees through the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic, in partnership with CARES, C2C, and the Housing Navigator
- The committee had been working on the next Work Life Fair for August 2020 – however this event will not move forward due to the pandemic

**Employee Recognition:**

This CPC committee, Chaired by Nancy Cowley and Vice-chair Anselma Lopez, manages four special awards created by the CPC that are exclusive to State Classified employees. This year the committee has focused on making the Educational Assistance Award more accessible to employees and embody the vision the donor intended – that process is ongoing. Additionally, this committee was able to partner with the LSC and HDS to present recipients of the Everyday Hero Awards with coffee and lunch vouchers. The work of this committee is conducted with in person meetings and email follow ups switching to Microsoft Teams in March. During FY20, CPC recognized:

- Five (5) – Outstanding Achievement Awardees (this award was first given in 1976, and now includes a \$1,000 award and recognition at Celebrate! CSU, these awards are funded by the VPUO)
- Two (2) – Positive Action Awardees
- Six (6) – Everyday Hero Awardees
- Eight (8) – Educational Assistance Awardees, (\$500 per award given to help State Classified employees further their education or professional development) made possible through a donor funded account

OAA: Hannah Penland, Judy Rogers, Meg Skeeahan, Elizabeth Sorensen, Marcia ‘Marci’ Stille

PAA: Robyn Fergus, Rams Against Hunger

EHA: Andrew Cundiff, Kristy Millsapps, Amanda Farmer, Ross Maybon, Balbino Oqueli,

EAA: Nancy Cowly, Kristy Millsapps, Janet Porter (FALL); Kaitlin Sherman, Valerie Lewis, Jan Lee Cordova, Amanda Farmer, Barbara Rischeill (SPRING)

More information about CPC awards can be found here: <https://cpc.colostate.edu/annual-cpc-awards/>

### **Legislative:**

Chaired by Brian Gilbert, and Vice-chaired by Adrian MacDonald - the CPC Legislative Committee organized a meeting with Representatives Cathy Kipp and Jeni Arndt at the regular CPC meeting in December 2019. In this meeting, CPC was able to ask questions to gauge the direction of several legislative items impacting State Classified employees, such as the collective bargaining (House Bill 20-1153 – Colorado Partnership for Quality Jobs and Services Act - which was signed into effect by Governor Jared Polis in June 2020).

The CPC Legislative Committee assisted the Executive Committee by continuing the conversation around expanded leave benefits for State Classified employees, particularly around accruals and sick and annual leave, and front-loading sick leave. It was determined in fall 2019 that CSU could not front-load sick leave for State Classified employees as it would violate rules within the Code of Colorado Regulations, State Personnel Board 5-7 (CCR 801-1). In March 2020, members from the Legislative Committee and the Executive Committee went to Denver and met with Ramona Gomoll, Chief Human Resources Officer – State of Colorado and Jack Wylie, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs and Legislative Liaison – Department of

Personnel and Administration, where we presented our leave data comparison and discussed the expansion of leave benefits for State Classified employees.

For the past three years, the CPC has been proposing to expand the rating system to a 5-point scale. The CPC believes, due to feedback from our employees, that an expanded rating system would allow for greater distinction in performance evaluations thereby increasing morale of our employees. This continues to be on hold at the state level, but CPC will continue discussing and tracking the change to the performance management plan at the state level.

There was no CPC member trip to Denver this year due to COVID-19, however, we did meet with our locally elected representatives, and continue to build relationships at the state level with other leaders.

Brian Gilbert will be stepping down from his role as Chair in FY21, but will continue to serve on the Legislative Committee.

**Executive:**

- Coordinating with CSU HR and State of Colorado DHR and DPA toward a transition from a 3-point rating scale to a 5-point scale for State Classified evaluations (this has been an ongoing conversation since July 2016)
- Assessing leave for state classified employees in a 50-state comparison report
- Tracking outcomes of supervisor training as a key factor in campus climate with Training and Organizational Development
- Employee recognition and professional development opportunities
- Connecting employees to campus and community resources
- Continued involvement with the CSU budgeting process
- Policies affecting all CSU employees

The Executive Committee is comprised of the four CPC officers: Meg Skeehan – Chair; Wayne Hall – Vice-chair; Jim Abraham– Secretary; and Adrian Macdonald– Treasurer. The Executive Committee meets monthly to plan and review the next meeting agenda and to track and manage the work of the Council and our committees.

Executive Committee members have served on numerous University committees and initiatives including: Assessment for Diversity Issues (Employee Climate Survey creation committee); Campus Climate Committee; Campus Bicycle Advisory Committee; the President’s Commission on Diversity and Inclusion; CoSFP; C2C Advisory Committee; the Eddy & Kuder Scholarship selection committee; Professional Development Initiative Award; The President’s Council on Culture; the University Benefits Committee; and of course – tracking the annual legislative question of wages, pushing for expanded leave benefits, and tracking the impacts of PERA on our employees.

The CPC Chair and Vice-chair participated in the President’s Fall Forum to start the year, then met regularly throughout the year with: Lynn Johnson, the Vice President for University

Operations; Nik Olsen, President's Office; Diana Prieto, Associate Vice President for Human Capital; Robyn Fergus, Executive Director CSU HR; Tim Gallagher and Sue Doe, Chair and Vice-chair of Faculty Council (respectively); Catherine Douras and Tori Anderson, Chair and Vice-chair (respectively) of the Administrative Professional Council; and, on a few occasions, direct conversations with CSU President, Joyce McConnell.

### **Additional Efforts:**

#### **Ad-hoc committee: Employee Climate Survey 2018 Data**

Led by Adrian Macdonald, this committee identified areas and departments that had some of the most concerning responses to the Employee Climate Survey in 2018. The purpose was to meet with their leadership and assess what work was being done to address those issues that were indicated in the survey. This group would also connect units to share ideas and best practices across the University and hold them accountable. Overall, the goal was to answer the challenge of the Assessment for Diversity Issues Group (that writes and distributes the Campus Climate Survey) and facilitate action to address the issues that were raised in the Employee Climate Survey. This spring the group met with Tom Satterly from Facilities to discuss their many initiatives and discuss partnering in some of them like their orientation and helping to develop a department survey. Moving forward the group will check in on units to make sure they are still working on these issues despite the shutdown.

#### **In conclusion:**

The mission of the Classified Personnel Council is to promote, improve and protect the role of State Classified employees within the University system. The most effective means to accomplishing this mission is to maintain active participation in shared governance at CSU. The University depends on the CPC to represent State Classified perspectives, ideas and concerns in University planning and decision-making. Moreover, State Classified employees also depend on the CPC to be a strong advocate and ensure their voices are invited, heard, appreciated, valued, and included.

In FY21, CPC will continue efforts and involvement with ongoing Council and University committees focusing on campus initiatives, especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that has already strained campus operations and budgets. CPC must continue to represent the needs of State Classified employees at CSU, focusing on wages and on medical and leave benefits. Too many CSU State Classified employees find themselves on the floor of their wage-range, with little opportunity to reach the salary midpoint. The ongoing issue of lower than market wages is an underlying and exacerbating aspect of our State Classified employees' job satisfaction, livelihood, health, and overall well-being. State wages must improve to allow CSU and State Classified employees to remain competitive in the work force – attracting and retaining the best talent available, and we cannot let the economic downturn be an excuse for not keeping pace with the rising costs of living. This was the response after the 2008 economic recession, and it was reflected in the budget that was passed for FY21 at the state level. Leave benefits for State Classified employees continue to highlight the lack of equity on our campus, and with the pandemic, it may require State Classified employees to use a great deal of their

leave accumulated if they or their family members become ill.

In addition, the Council will provide input toward issues such as (but not limited to):

- Identifying the impacts of House Bill 20-1153 – Colorado Partnership for Quality Jobs and Services Act across the state, but particularly at CSU
- Continue coordinating with CSU HR and State of Colorado DHR and DPA toward a transition from a 3-point rating scale to a 5-point scale for State Classified evaluations. Continue working with CSU HR on developing a comprehensive performance management philosophy at CSU
- Continue to push for expanded leave benefits, particularly sick leave accrual
- Employee recognition and professional development opportunities that are modified to meet the public health guidelines that keep our community healthy during the pandemic
- Connecting employees to campus and community resources
- Continued involvement with the CSU budgeting process

Since 1972, our Council members have represented the best of CSU – committed, dedicated, and caring – and they are ready to work and to contribute to the continuous improvement of Colorado State University.

Prepared by Meg Skeehan, Chair

Approved for submittal by a vote of the Classified Personnel Council on August 20, 2020