The Council of University System Staff (CUSS) began the 2007-2008 year with the following Executive Committee:

Dr. John T. Wolfe, Jr., University System of Maryland Office, Chair
Janine Vienna, Salisbury University, Vice Chair
Judy Sabalauskas, University of Baltimore, Co-Secretary
Kimberly Lynne, University of Baltimore, Co-Secretary
Dave DeLooze, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Member-At-Large
Joe Hill, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Member-At-Large
Larry Lauer, University of Maryland, College Park, Past Chair.
Rosario I. van Daalen, Chancellor’s Liaison to CUSS

CUSS defined the following four issues as areas of focus for 2007-2008:

• To stimulate continued support and sustainable commitment to the practice of Shared Governance among Staff employees, administrators and Regents in the USM,

• To recommend and work with the USM on a policy review of Human Resources issues for “Excluded” from Collective Bargaining Staff employees to assure consistent application of existing policy and flexible areas for new policy,

• To review and recommend procedures to assure Systemwide currency and equitable procedures under the Exempt Staff pay administration policy, and

Continued on page 4.
A MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR (MAY 2008):

As the 2008-2009 academic year approaches, the University System of Maryland (USM) can again look back over a year filled with tremendous progress. As you know, higher education was a significant winner in the special legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly. One key outcome was the creation of the Higher Education Investment Fund (HEIF), which established—for the first time in the history of Maryland—a specific funding stream dedicated to higher education. Every member of the USM “family” played a role in this success. By speaking with one voice we not only achieved our goals but also set the stage for additional progress in the 2008 Legislative Session. Governor O’Malley and the General Assembly’s commitment to advancing higher education was further demonstrated in the passage of the FY 2009 operating budget, which provides the system a total of $1.08 billion in general funds and revenue from the HEIF. This translates into an increase in state funds of roughly a 9 percent. Assuming there are no post-session cuts to our budget, I will be recommending to the Board that USM universities freeze full-time in-state undergraduate tuition for a third straight year. In just three short years, Maryland will have gone from the sixth highest public university tuition state in the country to 16th. I am also pleased to note that the Governor’s budget contained funding for both merit and COLA pay increases. While state support is, of course, vital to our efforts, I think it is important to note that the USM has worked very hard over the past several years to earn this support.

The Board’s Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) initiative launched a reengineering of both our administrative and academic functions. Working with the Board of Regents, the Council of Presidents, the Council of University System Staff (CUSS), the Council of University System Faculty (CUSF), and the USM Student Council we implemented cost savings, cost avoidance, and other efforts to streamline the USM to better meet the needs of the students we serve, while protecting the integrity of our academic and research programs and minimizing the hardship for our dedicated Staff and Faculty employees. Since its inception, E&E has resulted in $94 million in direct cost savings and significant additional savings through cost avoidance. Throughout these efforts, I continue to be impressed with the dedication and commitment of CUSS. This diverse group of individuals—from across the University System—has stepped forward to work cooperatively and collegially for the advancement of System institutions and System Staff. You are one of the USM’s greatest assets and a driving force behind our rise to national eminence. As we move forward on addressing critical social issues—closing the achievement gap, enhancing Maryland’s competitiveness, and promoting environmental sustainability—I know CUSS will once again be an important and positive force in our collective efforts. The Board of Regents and I commend John T. Wolfe for his leadership as Chair over this past year and we look forward to continuing to work with him. We also commend this year’s Vice Chair, Janine Vienna, Co-Secretaries Judy Sabalauskas and Kimberley Lynne, Members-at-Large Joe Hill and David Delooze, and the Chancellor’s Liaison to CUSS, Rosario I. van Daalen, USMO-HR. I believe strongly that the Governor’s and the General Assembly’s priority for higher education bodes well for USM in the years ahead. Clearly they share our goal of providing affordable access to excellent programs and services for our students and for Marylanders. The efforts of CUSS have been a vital part of our success on every level and I look forward to our partnership continuing to yield productive and beneficial results.

Sincerely,

William E. Kirwan
Chancellor

For more information on the University of Maryland System Office, the Chancellor’s Office, and the USM Overview, visit the USM online at: www.usmd.edu
A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

To My Fellow Employees:
It was an honor to be selected by fellow CUSS members to be the 2007-2008 Chair of the Council of University System Staff. Under the USM Board of Regents’ Shared Governance Policy, Staff employees, excluded from participating in Collective Bargaining, are afforded “opportunities to participate, appropriate to their special knowledge and expertise” in an advisory capacity to the Chancellor, Regents, and Presidents. Second only to our responsibilities as conscientious and dedicated employees of the USM, it is vitally important that we take this role and the responsibilities that come with it to actively engage the Shared Governance process. It is through this process that Staff employees have a voice in “basic decisions that affect the USM, its institutions, and its employees.”

The 2007-2008 Year End Report in this Newsletter provides a summary of the work of the Council on your behalf. That work, which is ongoing, can only be effective with your involvement. Thus, it is important that you learn who your institutional CUSS representatives are and share your views and concerns with them. Equally important is for you to be involved with your Institution’s senate/council. Without your voice, the dynamic process of Shared Governance becomes weak and ineffective. No one wants this.

Thus, the Council has planned a series of regional staff leadership conferences on the Fundamentals of Shared Governance at various institutions on the day before its monthly meeting beginning in the fall 2008. The conference agenda includes a history of Shared Governance at Maryland universities, the organization and structure of the USM, the expanding roles and responsibilities of Staff employees, and the university as a political system. Attendance is free, but registration is required.

I urge you to consider becoming more involved with Shared Governance in the USM, consistent with your time and interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Sincerely,

John T. Wolfe, Jr., Ph.D.
CUSS Chair 2007-2008
• To promote a Systemwide educational program that clarifies the distinctions and policies for Shared Governance and how it differs from union representation.

Consistent with these areas of focus, CUSS began the 2007-2008 year discussing with Chancellor Kirwan and Chief Operating Officer/Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Joe Vivona, its planned activities, with particular focus on Shared Governance and promoting Systemwide education programs, as well as the assurance of currency and equitable procedures for the Exempt Staff pay administration policy Systemwide. CUSS secured commitment from the Chancellor to support implementation of a series of regional Shared Governance workshops across the University System of Maryland (USM). CUSS also committed to provide the Chancellor with an annual report on the status of Shared Governance based on data and findings gathered by it members. The Executive Committee presented a recommendation on a policy review of Human Resources issues for Excluded Staff employees. In its advisory role, CUSS continued constructive dialogue on these matters with the Chancellor throughout the year.

The CUSS Executive Committee met separately with COO/VCAF Joe Vivona to discuss the issues and options of the extra merit pay award for “Excluded” from Collective Bargaining Nonexempt Staff.

Mr. Vivona committed to re-establish a work group to re-invigorate the “extra merit pay” program for these “Excluded” Nonexempt staff employees, based on availability of funds. Mr. Vivona indicated that this work group would include vice presidents for administration, Human Resources officers, CUSS representatives, and Staff employees.

Regarding employees’ state benefits, Mrs. Anne Timmons, Director, Employee Benefits Division of the Maryland Department of Budget and Management (DBM-EBD), gave a very informative presentation about the staggering logistics of the state’s benefits management and changes affecting State/USM Dental Plans.

CUSS has also worked with other constituent groups within the USM. CUSS received a very informative presentation from Ms. Kelly Baker of the Maryland Student Climate Coalition. Formed in September 2007 to coordinate and organize student led climate initiatives, the Coalition’s goal is to mount an effective campaign to move the USM to a carbon neutral policy, according to Ms. Baker. Ms. Baker emphasized building relationships among faculty, students, and staff as important to effectively addressing this issue. She noted that the communication of a shared vision on climate makes it easier to identify problems and solve them. CUSS endorsed in principle the Maryland Student Climate Coalition. CUSS sent a letter supporting the development of a USM carbon neutral policy to the Chancellor, Regents, and Presidents. For a second consecutive year, CUSS held a joint meeting with the Council of University System Faculty (CUSF) to discuss topics of mutual interests.
The topics included:

- support for the FY’09 USM budget request,
- tuition remission policy - definition of dependent
- the Green Initiative,
- Shared Governance,
- support for the benefits of Higher Education in Maryland, and
- CUSS-CUSF support for Annapolis 101 and Student Legislative Day.

The Chancellor joined the Councils to brief them on the FY’09 budget and USM priorities (closing the achievement gap, Maryland’s economic competitiveness globally, and climate change). Also at this meeting Ms. JoAnn G. Goedert, Chief Council for Educational Affairs, Office of the Attorney General, also provided CUSS and CUSF with an update on the status of the draft for the “definition of dependent” within the context of the USM tuition remission policy.

CUSS also met with Associate Vice Chancellor for Government Relations, Patrick J. Hogan, who briefed the Council at its December meeting on the FY’09 Budget Process and the impending 2008 Maryland General Assembly session.

Being aware of the challenges related to an Exempt Staff pay administration policy, in April 2008 CUSS expressed concern to the Chancellor about the inconsistency or lack of procedures under the policy within institutions in the USM. Its concern centered on the irregularity of review of where Exempt Staff employees fall within the market. CUSS recognized that there is some variance in such plans based on institutional size and the nature of the hiring market used by the Institutions. Using information from the Pay Administration Policy reports submitted in 2000 by USM institutions, CUSS developed a chart and tracking instrument and offered it for consideration in collecting information on Exempt Staff pay administration procedures. The tracking instrument seeks to determine if institutions are following USM policy with regard to Exempt Staff pay administration and if an institutional procedure is in place and being applied on a regular basis. Follow up is being made with the Institutions.

CUSS received 32 nominations for the Regents’ Staff Awards from eleven Institutions out of the 13 USM Institutions plus the System Office. There were 16 Exempt and 16 Nonexempt Staff nominations. Although the nominations were less than half of the 84 possible nominations, CUSS appreciates the support that the BOR and Presidents provided in recognizing Staff.

In its continuing focus on Shared Governance, CUSS voted unanimously to develop and implement a series of one-day regional Staff Leadership Conferences on the day before its monthly meeting similar to those held in 1997 and 1999.

It charged the Executive Committee to present plan for these conferences. The threefold purpose the conferences is:

- to make Excluded Staff aware of what the Council of
University System Staff is;
  • to educate Excluded Staff about Shared Governance; and
  • to promote greater interest in, and involvement with the Council as a partner in Shared Governance.

The conferences are open to all Excluded Staff. The first regional conference occurred on August 8, 2008 at Salisbury University.

CUSS advised the Chancellor of its concern about how Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) from union organizations will impact Excluded employees. For example at UMCP, the AFSCME MOU states that the Performance Reviews of collective bargaining unit employees will have only “Meets Expectations” and “Does not Meet Expectations.” However, the Chancellor’s Salary Guidelines say that Nonexempt Staff rated “Outstanding” or “Above Standards” could receive extra merit funds. Since these categories have been eliminated at UMCP for all Nonexempt Staff, it is apparent that because of these changes, Excluded Staff will no longer be eligible for the extra merit. Excluded Staff did not have an opportunity to comment or advise the President or the Chancellor on this matter, as it is intended in a Shared Governance environment.

Another related CUSS concern had to do with Fees for Services, specifically the parking permit fee. The MOU states the fee “shall not increase by more than 7.5% over the fee for the previous year during the term of the MOU.” The CUSS’ concern is that Excluded Staff would be required to pay for something to which the union and an institution agreed. CUSS requested clarification from the Chancellor on its status in these matters.

CUSS believes that its voice has been heard on issues raised with the Chancellor and Regents. However, dialogue with the Chancellor and members of his senior staff is to be ongoing on issues that have not yet led to resolution, which because of their nature and complexity, extend beyond one year to be completely addressed. Thus, CUSS looks forward to receiving from the Chancellor, the presidents’ reports on the role of Shared Governance at their Institution. Discussion with the Chancellor on policy review of Human Resources issues, the procedures for Exempt Staff pay administration, and educational programming for Shared Governance will continue.

In closing, this Chair notes a particular challenge to the process of Shared Governance and leadership related to the level and function of a Staff employee in the System or institutional hierarchy and the expectations, real or perceived, of that Staff member’s ability to participate as Staff in CUSS leadership or as a general member. Shared Governance offers an opportunity for Excluded Exempt and Nonexempt Staff employees on Regular and Contingent II Status to participate in the process. It is important to the effectiveness and success of the USM Shared Governance process that the knowledge, experience, and perspectives of upper level managers be brought to bear as may be appropriate.
A CUSS initiative, the Board of Regents’ University System of Maryland Staff Awards represents the highest honor bestowed by the Board of Regents for achievements of Exempt and Nonexempt Staff employees from institutions within the University System of Maryland. The awards are presented to staff members who have demonstrated excellence in one of the following categories: (1) contribution to the institution and/or unit to which the person belongs; (2) service to students in an academic or residential environment; or (3) public service, within or outside the university. There are two awards given in each category—one Exempt Staff and one Nonexempt Staff—for a total of six awards. Each recipient will receive a $1,000 stipend, and will be awarded a plaque. In addition, appropriate notices will be placed to publicize each honoree’s accomplishments.

**2007-2008 Recipients**

**Exceptional Contribution to the Institution and/or Unit to Which a Person Belongs**

**Exempt Staff**

**DENNIS P. CUDDY**  
Manager of Administration and Facilities, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, UMBC  
Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, UMBC: “As the manager responsible for the complex infrastructure of a major academic department, Dennis works tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that the laboratories, classrooms, offices, and business processes of the Meyerhoff Chemistry Building are operating well….Dennis makes that possible, day after day, through his total commitment to the Department, his exceptional planning and problem-solving skills, and his skillful supervision of 10 employees, including front desk staff, a business manager, purchasing agent, supply room workers, and a glass blower.”

**Nonexempt Staff**

**PATRICIA J. MARTIN**  
Program Management Specialist, Student Support Services, UMBC  
Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, UMBC: “Pat also is recognized as a resource for colleagues across campus, including those working in the McNair Scholars Program, the Classic Upward Bound Program, the Upward Bound Mathematics and Science Program, and the Learning Resources Center. Recently, for example, she took time – outside of the work day – to help the McNair Scholars’ new administrative assistant learn to navigate the PeopleSoft Program, just one of the many inspiring stories I hear from Pat’s colleagues.”

**Outstanding Service to Students in an Academic or Residential Environment**

**Exempt Staff**

**CATHERINE M. BIELAWSKI**  
Director of Undergraduate Student Services, UMBC  
Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, UMBC: “When she was promoted to Director of Undergraduate Student Services in the College in 2003, Cathy continued to advise students – indeed, she won the College’s Advisor of the Year Award that year - - while also supervising two full-time academic advisors, teaching the College’s success seminar, and contributing her insight and enthusiasm to many College and University...”

**Nonexempt Staff**

**JEANNE MARTIN**  
Administrative Assistant III, College of Computer Mathematics and Physical Sciences, Department of Geology, UMCP  
Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Michael Brown, Professor of Geology, UMCP: “On our campus, many individuals provide outstanding service beyond their normal duties. What sets Jeanne Martin apart is her extraordinary personal and caring service to...”
programs, projects and committees. A strong advocate for students, Cathy is a valued member of such University committees as the Academic Standards Committee, the Academic Integrity Committee, the Student Administration Advisory Committee, and the Retention Committee.”

graduate students and faculty in this Department. She has provided the critical link between students and faculty, and between the Department and the Graduate School that is a foundation of any successful Graduate Program.

**Exempt Staff**

**Earnestine B. Baker**
Special Assistant to the Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the Meyerhoff Scholars Program, UMBC

**Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, UMBC:** "She is committed not only to the Scholars’ academic success, but also to their development as outstanding citizens who make a difference in their communities. That she has made a difference in the Scholars’ lives is apparent from the fact that many current Meyerhoff students and program alumni stay in touch with her and turn to her as a mentor and trusted counselor. She inspires them to work hard, support their fellow students, and excel. She has contributed in significant ways to creating a supportive environment that places high demands on staff and students and gives students the opportunity to achieve at the highest levels.”

**Karen Sweeney-Jett**
Administrative Assistant, Office of Institutional Advancement, UMBC

**Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, UMBC:** “Karen Sweeney-Jett is very much admired by her colleagues for her spirit of public service to UMBC. She routinely goes above and beyond the call of duty, demonstrating daily what it means to be a citizen and leader on campus. She is an inspiration to all of us.”

**Nonexempt Staff**

**Karen Sweeney-Jett**
Administrative Assistant, Office of Institutional Advancement, UMBC

**Excerpt from letter of nomination submitted by Freeman A. Hrabowski, III, President, UMBC:** “Karen Sweeney-Jett is very much admired by her colleagues for her spirit of public service to UMBC. She routinely goes above and beyond the call of duty, demonstrating daily what it means to be a citizen and leader on campus. She is an inspiration to all of us.”
COMMITTEE REPORTS

BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION
CHAIR: JACKIE EBERTS
SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

• This committee sent an official request to the CUSS Executive Committee to solicit information from each institution’s HR Office regarding how each had reviewed and administered its policy on the Exempt Staff Pay Administration since its implementation and program inception in January 2000. This request resulted in a compilation of year 2000 Institution procedural information maintained at USM which had not been updated by most institutions. The council Chair met with the Chancellor, who will follow up with the institutions for updates.

• This committee started reviewing an aged draft policy for the USM training program. Time constraints prevented this committee from further review and updated recommendations. The committee anticipates this item being on its agenda for FY-08/09.

• This committee is working towards compiling non-monetary employee discount information from each institution as well as identifying specific discounts that may be available for any USM employee.

COMMUNICATIONS
CHAIR: MARIE MEEHAN
BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

The Communications Committee has kept the CUSS membership current on the Council of University System Staff (CUSS) website:
http://www.usmd.edu/usm/workgroups/SystemStaff/index.html

The website includes:
• CUSS USM BOR Staff awardees chosen in the 2007-2008 academic year
• Standing Committee’s Membership
• Approved minutes of each meeting
• Annual Schedule of CUSS Meeting
  • Highlights and Photographs of USM Institutions
  • Newsletter
  • Members/Alternates

This committee also gathers all articles for the newsletter and prepares it for annual distribution during the months of September or October. It also prepares an orientation package for new CUSS members.

This package includes:
• CUSS By-Laws
• Mission
• Heritage
• CUSS representatives’ duties
• List of standing committees and its members
• Website information sheet

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CHAIR: COLETTE BECKER
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE

The Community Development Committee’s main charge is to oversee the nomination and review process for the annual Board of Regents/CUSS Staff Awards.

In October of 2007 nomination packets were sent to the Presidents’ offices of the 13 Institutions of the USM and to the USM Office. Institutions were asked to return their nomination packets to CUSS by January 18, 2008. The review process was begun and completed in February 2008. Summaries of each of the recommended awardees was completed in March and presented to the Board of Regents (BOR) for their review and approval. The BOR voted on April 11, 2008 and approved all nominees submitted by CUSS.

Eleven institutions submitted 32 nominees for consideration in the three award categories: Exceptional Contribution to the Institution and/or Unit to Which the Person Belongs; Outstanding Service to Students in an Academic or Residential Environment and Extraordinary Public Service to the University or Greater Community. Sixteen Exempt and sixteen Nonexempt Staff employee nominations were received this year. The Committee is concerned about the lower number of nominations this year and hopes to see an increase in nominations for both categories next year.
During the Special Session in the fall of 2007, as part of the Tax Reform Act (Chapter 2) the Higher Education Investment Fund was created. The corporate income tax rate was increased from 7 percent to 8.25 percent, with 6 percent of this tax being dedicated to Higher Education. This is the first time that a special fund has been created and dedicated specifically for the State’s Higher Education System. These funds are in addition to those already provided by the state and helped prevent tuition increases for the upcoming year.

Higher Education Funding Model Commission – HB 133, extends the deadline for reporting from December 2007 until December 2008. It also terminates the commission on June 1, 2009. The bill also adds the Lieutenant Governor as a member of the commission.

HB 1287 creates the Parren J. Mitchell Public Service Scholarship program. New funds were provided for the Maryland Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program, (1.5 million), which can be used to attend designated graduate schools such as medicine, law, dentistry, pharmacy, social work, veterinary medicine and nursing.

Senate Bill 208 requires new and substantially renovated State buildings to be constructed as high performance (Green) Buildings.

State and Higher Education Personnel – funding was provided for COLA (2%) and merit increases for employees effective July 1, 2008.

Senate Bill 177 allows State employees to carry over annual leave hours to 600 (75 days). However, any annual leave over 400 hrs will be forfeited when the employees leaves state service. NOTE: The bill does not apply to USM employees.

As always, CUSS will continue to monitor the legislative process and be proactive in support of the USM, its students and employees. More legislative information can be found on the web at http://mlis.state.md.us
2007-2008 Council of University System Staff

**Representatives:**

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Council Members represent the thirteen (13) institutions and the Systems Office (USMO) for the USM. For more information on the Council of University System Staff contact your Institution Representative or visit: www.usmd.edu/Leadership/Workgroups/SystemStaff.
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Willie Brown

Larry Lauer (Past Chair)
Executive Committee

Sister Maureen Schrimpe, I.H.M.
Benefits and Compensation Committee

Sharon Simmons Cook (Alternate)
Benefits and Compensation Committee

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE

Chenita Kollock
Communications Committee

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Ayman Abdo
Community Development Committee

Cassandra C. Lewis
Legislative Committee

Marvin Pyles
Communications Committee

Scott Wibbert
Community Development Committee

Kassidy Hill (Alternate)
Community Development Committee

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND OFFICE

Mary E. Reed
Communications Committee

John T. Wolfe, Jr. (CHAIR)
Executive Committee

CHANCELLOR’S LIAISON TO CUSS

Rosario Van Daalen
Executive Committee