

PSA VOICE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION

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The PSA Voice?

What is the PSA Voice? It is the official newsletter of the Professional Staff Association, published by the [PSA Communications Committee](#) and other contributors. Scheduled to be emailed three to four times each year to inform the PSA, strengthen our sense of community, and further enrich UT's professional culture.

The PSA Voice will feature such items as:

- **A Message From the Chair** (featuring general items of interest, hot PSA topics, highlights from meetings with President Jacobs or other upper administration, Family Campaign, etc.)
- **PSC Meeting Highlights**, including HR Issues and hot topics
- **Event Promotions and Highlights**
- **PSA Staff Spotlights** – highlight accomplishments of professional staff. Readers will be able to make suggestions for future spotlights right from the e-newsletter and PSA Web site. Examples of staff



Welcome, PSA Member. This is the latest issue of the PSA Voice. Enjoy!

Message from the Chair

PSA Members,

Since our last newsletter we've begun the budget development process at the University. This year we're handling it a little differently. In addition to the colleges and units preparing budget reduction scenarios, a task force has been formed to look university-wide at potential areas where we could realize cost savings. I serve on the FY12 Budget Formulation and Reengineering Task Force as the representative for Professional Staff Association employees. I have received many good suggestions and spoken with several of you to get feedback to take back to the group. This communication is very useful so I encourage you to continue submitting your ideas to me directly or [submit your ideas to the council](#).

In addition, President Jacobs has asked Professional Staff Council to enter into formal discussions with him where we will provide recommendations on the budget process and its potential impact on PSA employees. We appreciate this opportunity and are optimistic that we can help formulate a cohesive plan that will lessen the negative, permanent outcomes for PSA employees. It's important that the President hear directly from you as well. Dr. Jacobs has graciously agreed to have an open discussion with PSA employees to hear your concerns and suggestions. I hope you will be able to join the President and members of Professional Staff Council on February 22 for this unique opportunity. It will be a chance to have a meaningful discussion with your colleagues and get informed on the process up to this point. This event will not be webcast so be there!

Joely Giammarco, MBA
Chair, Professional Staff Council



*Joely Giammarco,
PSC Chair*

accomplishments are serving on boards, receiving awards or recognition, publishing materials, presenting at conferences, noteworthy community involvement, and more.

- [PSA Committee Updates](#)
- [PSA Web site Links](#)

We encourage your active participation in making this publication better. If you would like to write an article or suggest a story idea, please [email Donald Curtis](#), Communications Committee Chair. All questions and comments are welcome.

[Donald Curtis](#), MA

Chair, PSA Communications Committee

PSA Voice Spotlights

Every issue of the PSA Voice will introduce you to PSA employees as part of our continuing effort to bring our campuses, our membership closer.



All interviews by Carole Young

Spotlight on Diane Ammons Assistant to the Chair, Medical Microbiology and Immunology



PSA VOICE : *When did you begin working at The University of Toledo, Diane?*

Diane: *I began working at the University in June of 1989.*

PSA VOICE : *How would you describe your job?*

Diane: *My job is lots of fun because I*

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Open Discussion between President Jacobs and PSA on the FY 2012 Budget – IMPORTANT!

Open Discussion with President Jacobs
Tuesday, February 22nd
12:30 – 1:30
Student Union Ingman Room

Join us for an open forum with President Jacobs where we will be discussing the FY12 budget development process. Come respectfully and proactively to share your thoughts, recommendations, and concerns with Dr. Jacobs and your fellow PSA colleagues.

We are optimistic that together, with your help, we can provide input that will help the Fiscal 12 Budget Formulation and Reengineering Task Force formulate a more cohesive budgetary plan in hopes to lessen the negative, permanent outcomes for PSA employees in particular.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and participation. We look forward to seeing you on the 22nd!

2011 Open Enrollment for PSA Sick Leave Bank

Open enrollment for the Professional Staff Association's Sick Leave Bank will take place from Tuesday, March 1, through Thursday, March 31, 2011.

The bank is a voluntary program open to Professional Staff Association (PSA) members on both the Health Science and Main campuses. According to Deborah Sobczak, chair of the Sick Leave Bank Committee, this is the second year eligible employees from the Health Science Campus may participate.

Eligible employees are defined in PSA bylaws as "all non-bargaining unit employees on all campuses whether salary or hourly, classified or unclassified, full or part time, excluding those with faculty rank." The bank collects one-time, voluntary donations of sick time from PSA personnel to assist those who may be stricken with catastrophic injury or illness.

"It's a way to help our colleagues bridge a gap of time that can take place between the exhaustion of their benefits from sick, personal and vacation days and when they qualify for long-term, permanent disability benefits," Sobczak explained. "The bank is used only for Sick Leave Bank members with personal catastrophic illness or injury."

She said full-time PSA members may donate 16 hours and part-time members may donate eight hours of personal sick time to the bank, which is administered by Human Resources. Participants donate the time only once, no matter how long they continue their employment at UT.

You can [download the enrollment form](#) and return it to PSA Sick Leave Bank, care of Deb Sobczak, MS 608, by March 31, 2011.

Additional details, including a link to the sick leave policy, are available on the PSA Sick Leave Bank Web page: <http://www.utoledo.edu/org/psa/sickleavebank.asp>



Cathy Zimmer,
Communications
Committee

have contact with all levels of personnel in the institution, and no two days are alike. In my department we act as a team moving ahead instead of individuals looking to get ahead.

PSA VOICE: What do you think distinguishes UT from other workplaces?

Diane: I've been in the public sector long enough to qualify for social security; but I've never learned more interesting things about diverse cultures than I have working here. Also the learning atmosphere is contagious.

PSA VOICE: What UT resource is your must-have to perform your job?

Diane: Without a doubt it would be IT. Without them I could not do this interview...or about 80% of my work.

PSA VOICE: Do you have any time away plans for spring break?

Diane: No, sorry, I used up all my vacation money on a trip to Cancun last year.

PSA VOICE: Are there any pets at your house?

Diane: Yes, one dog, 4 cats. There seems to be an invisible sign in our front yard telling all strays to gather and stay at our house.

2011 PSA Scholarship Application is Available

Applications for the PSA Scholarship are currently being accepted and will be awarded by June 1, 2011. This scholarship will be awarded to a part-time or full-time student who is currently enrolled at The University of Toledo. The recipient must have completed at least two (2) semesters of coursework and is no longer considered a first year student at the time the scholarship is awarded. A letter recommending the applicant must be submitted from a currently employed PSA member along with this application and three (3) personal references.



*Thomas Trimble,
PSA Scholarship
Committee Chair*

Complete applications can be delivered to Thomas Trimble in SU2525 or sent to Mail Stop #114 prior to 5:00pm April 1, 2011 to be considered. Please share this information with UT students and support a student's application if you are asked to do so.

The link to the application on the Financial Aid web page is given here for your convenience: [2011 PSA Scholarship Application](#)

Changes to OPERS Retirement System

As many are aware, the Ohio Retirement Study Council has asked Ohio's public pension systems to explore options that would contain costs and strengthen their pension funds. This request is being initiated due to the recent economic challenges that many face. February 1st, Legislation has been introduced to answer this request in the form of House Bill 69 sponsored by Rep. Lynn Wachtmann. Every member of one of these pension plans will be affected. For example, the Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS) "Age & Service retirement eligibility" will be changed. What currently is eligible is 30 years of service or age 55 with 25 years of service or age 60 with 5 years. This will change to age 55 with 32 years of service or age 67 with 5 years. OPERS retirees who are getting a 3% simple cost of living allowance will under this legislation change receive up to 3% based on the percent change of the Consumer Price Index. The legislation change will be transitioned to for 5-10 years. In the case of the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) age and service requirements would change to a minimum of age 60 with 35 years of service – members may currently retire at any age with 30 years of service. Also, STRS members will see a change in the Cost of Living Allowance which will be reduced from 3% to 2% in July 2012. An increase of the members contributions will go from 10% of their Salary to up to 14%. Also affected by this legislation is the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund.



*Churton Budd,
Communications
Committee*

Some useful links to information for OPERS members include:

- <https://www.opers.org/>
- Comparative summary of proposed OPERS changes: <https://www.opers.org/News/2011/HB69chart.pdf>

Some useful links to information for STRS members include:

- <https://www.strsoh.org/>
- Outline of STRS plan components: <https://www.strsoh.org/pdfs/40-305.pdf>
- Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund: <http://www.op-f.org/>

Benefits You Might Not Think About

Of course we have the obvious benefits of being a member of the PSA at the University of Toledo (salary, medical, tuition waivers, etc) but there are other ones that often go unnoticed. I pride myself on finding and using these little perks, so I thought I'd share a few with you. If you have any I didn't mention, email me at donald.curtis@utoledo.edu. If you already knew about them, then great--tell others! If not, then enjoy. As Calvin once said to Hobbes, "There's treasure everywhere!"



*Don Curtis,
Communications
Committee Chair*

- Free lectures, art displays, film screenings, live performances, and the occasional free lunch abound to those who make it a habit to check out the UT Master Events Calendar. <http://calendar.utoledo.edu/MasterCalendar.aspx>
- Free use of the Rec Center for Main Campus employees: http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/rec/SRC_Membership.html
- Discounts on UT Theatre and Film tickets <http://utoledo.tix.com/Schedule.asp?VenueCode=5175,5097,5141,5142,5143,7168,7433,7478,7479>
- Discounts on UT sporting event tickets: <http://www.utrockets.com/>
- The following benefits are available through <http://tirestoledo.org/> Check them out!
 - Summer Park Discount Tickets
 - National Discounts
 - Mailer Services (promoting you!)
 - Employee I.D. Cards & Benefits Booklets
 - Monthly Networking Meetings
 - Monthly Newsletter
 - Membership/Services Directory
 - Bulletin Board of Members' Services
 - Bi-Monthly Informational Seminars
 - Speakers' Bureau
- All UT employees get a discount at the following businesses. The amount of discount varies, but it is often around 15%.
 - El Vaquero
 - Banana Republic
 - 15% governmental employee discount with Verizon
 - Big Boy's on Secor Road has a 10% discount for UT Staff/Student with ID
 - if you know of others, tell me!
- Prescription Benefits at UT Pharmacies on Main Campus and Health Science Campus: http://www.utoledo.edu/outpatientpharmacy/FacultyStaff_Benefits.html
- Software discounts as Students, Faculty & Staff: utoledo.edu/education/centers/collegeComputing/softwarepurchase.html
- Computer purchase discounts at: http://www.utoledo.edu/it/NS/Computer_Purchases.html