

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN FACULTY AND STUDENTS**

**May 6, 2013**

500 Main

**11:30--1:00 p.m.**

**Members present:** D. Katherine Spiess, Susan Ohmer, Kevin Barry, Abigail Palko for Pamela Wojcik, Grace Xing, Paulette Curtis, Margaret Porter, Catherine Rastovski, Rebecca Wingert, Aimee Buccellato, Maura Ryan, Alison Rice,

**Members absent and excused:** Jade Avelis, Kathie Newman, Katie Rose, Jennifer Mason McAward

**Permanent Invited Guests:** Catherine Pieronek

**Guests:** Jessica Brookshire, Associate Director of Public Affairs/State and Local Public Affairs, and Jay Caponigro, Director of Community Engagement/State and Local Affairs.

**1. Welcome**

Prof. Susan Ohmer welcomed members to the last meeting of the academic year. She also welcomed Jay Caponigro and Jessica Brookshire from the office of Public Affairs, who have been invited to talk to the committee about ND's community engagement activities.

**2. Minutes of March 20, 2013 meeting**

The minutes of the March 20, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved.

Prof. Ohmer mentioned that she has been in contact with the Office of Special Events about the topic broached at the March meeting on protocol for introductions; she will continue to follow up this topic.

**3. Engagement--**Invited guests Mr. Caponigro and Ms. Brookshire gave a presentation on the many activities in which ND is involved to foster strong community engagement between the university and local and state groups. The office of Public Affairs works in several areas to build partnerships between the university and community groups that strengthen both through the creation of a prosperous community. The areas of concentration are:

- Advancing K-12 Education
- Community and Economic Development
- Civic Leadership and Government Relations

In 2009 Public Affairs took a survey of internal and external constituencies to better gauge the work ND was doing and to identify needs. The survey brought to light several pressing needs: stakeholders wanted ND to become more involved in the economic well-being of the community, to become more involved in local educational issues, and to formulate a better communication system so that efforts at community engagement are more well known and linked to one another. In addition, external community members asked for better access to resources and to the University in whole.

The survey also led to the creation of the Economic Development focus, now headed by Tim Sexton; the creation of EngageND—a resource to collate, communicate and leverage the enormous community engagement work being done by the university community; and the identification of key staff for access. Public Affairs cannot possibly manage all the work being done, but it can facilitate campus efforts, and it would like to measure the quantity and impact of our engagement efforts as a way to increase and improve partnerships.

Ms. Brookshire and Mr. Caponigro identified EngageND as a vital new tool for the university to facilitate engagement. With the information that can be gathered by this reporting mechanism, Public Affairs can knowledgeable help provide links between interested groups. It was also noted that a new survey will be undertaken in the next year to reassess successes and needs. This will also afford an opportunity to gauge both the internal and external perception of ND as a reliable community partner. It was noted by members that a more robust communication of the Office's mandate and many activities would be welcomed. It is likely many campus members are unaware of the work being done and the assistance that can be found through Public Affairs. Mr. Caponigro said his office would be willing to give a presentation to any department or unit that would like to invite them. He emphasized that there is 'an amazing amount of engagement work' being done between the university and the local and state communities. ND has recently been named to the 2013 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, of which it is very proud. In addition, ND applied for and was awarded the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, which will demonstrate to internal and external stakeholders the ongoing commitment of the university to engage with the wider community. This classification is earned by an application process that takes place every five years. ND's mission statement makes clear its focus, and the language of the Carnegie process also is of use in reaching out to and working with other groups and agencies.

The University's Economic Development initiative, led by Tim Sexton, is closely connected to the Eddy Street Commons project, which will be moving into Phase II sometime in the near future. There is a strong relationship with both Innovation Park and Ignition Park as well. A 2009 local economic impact report indicates that ND made an \$850 million contribution to the local economy. ND is looking to engage in regional economic development projects as well, offering assistance for economic strategic planning in particular.

Other projects include the Northeast Neighborhood Triangle development, which includes the redesign of the 5 Points intersection; the realignment of Douglas Road; and the development of a LEEF research project at St. Patrick's Park, which is a cutting edge environmental research and education facility exploring the interactions between aquatic and terrestrial exosystems; (UCWFS member Aimee Buccalieto has been involved in this project).

Members talked about safety concerns connected with the realignment of Douglas Road and other entry points onto the campus. As part of the Douglas Road project, the HAWK (HAWK stands for High-intensity Activated crossWalk beacon) pedestrian crossing system will be deployed, after discussions among Public Affairs, the campus Architect's office, and the South Bend city and county police forces. It was suggested that there might be an even more effective safe-crossing system; Prof. Xing offered to obtain information for Mr. Caponigro, who welcomed this information. After the meeting, the university announced that the system chosen was level 5, the most advanced one available.

Safety concerns were strongly expressed by committee members, especially for pedestrians walking between St. Mary's and ND and on Ivy Road. and Ms. Brookshire noted that safety is one of the five compelling reasons to realign Douglas Road. The reasons are:

- Safety
- Expand the campus for future growth
- Create four lanes east and west
- Beautification
- Continuation of community exercise/bicycle path

The Civic Leadership and Government Relations unit has worked closely with members of university leadership to get involved in non-profit board membership. There is also a Community Ambassadors group, which reaches out to community leaders and provides

them with an access point—Jackie Rucker—to campus expertise and support. There is a yearly community leaders' breakfast on campus as well.

Public Affairs facilitates collaborations between non-profits in the community and a range of university groups; these partnerships are greatly appreciated by the non-profit organizations. Often these connections take advantage of unidentified opportunities. For instance, ND was able to donate 250 mattresses to a community group that was happy to receive them. In another case, the Morris Inn has made arrangements with local help organizations to recycle toiletries, an item which is always under-resourced at these agencies. This partnership has flowered into a coalition of nine area hotels that continue to contribute to this effort. The Office also initiated a Board Governance Series for internal and external groups that was so successful it plans to repeat it for the next academic year.

Public Affairs has an active and growing Communications unit that seeks to draw attention to ongoing partnerships and also the potential for partnerships. This includes twice monthly "Experience Michiana" visits and regular Sunday announcements in the Community section of the *South Bend Tribune*.

Prof. Xing expressed interest in the development of an electronic contact site, where basic information could be gathered and easily obtained by campus stakeholders to facilitate an initial understanding of the services that Public Affairs' provides.

The K-12 Engagement unit of Public Affairs is a developing aspect of its work. Local agencies have asked for deeper commitment on the part of ND with community schools as well as better communication and collaboration between the various projects. Public Affairs is eager to get an accurate measurement of the engagement of the university community with schools in South Bend and invites feedback.

One interesting new educational project is the ND/Holy Cross College collaboration to offer 24 inmates of the Westville prison an opportunity to work toward a degree to be awarded by HCC. This project is in its infancy and was inspired by a similar one at Bard College.

The guests also provided information on yearly campus fundraisers such as the United Way appeal, as well as the many programs organized through the Robinson Community Learning Center, which serves community members from infancy through senior citizens.

In conclusion, Mr. Caponigro stressed that Public Affairs can be a resource to individual faculty and to the committee. The possible avenues for connection are numerous, and there are staff ready to help build partnerships with all interested parties.

Prof. Ohmer thanked the guests for this informative presentation.

#### **4. Updates:**

a. Family Information session—April 24, 2013

Prof. Ohmer reported that this meeting was 'absolutely fabulous' in the level and range of information provided to faculty. The presenters were exceptionally well prepared and engaging. Unfortunately, attendance was not large. Members discussed ways to increase attendance. It was suggested that the session be opened to staff and to graduate students, as there was information of value to both groups. It was also noted that new faculty would especially appreciate this kind of presentation; perhaps it could be combined with orientation sessions. It has been suggested that this meeting be scheduled during the lunch hour or after working hours; possibly multiple sessions can be held. Prof. Xing asked for electronic access to the session; Prof. Ohmer agreed to post the slides at the committee website for members to access.

One suggestion for attracting more attendance is to raffle services offered by the various organizations, for example, free passes for ice-skating or a consultation with a wellness coach. The question of a successful work/life balance is important to many constituencies and promotion of these campus services could be an effective recruitment tool. Members are encouraged to share this information with colleagues.

b. Diversity news: Prof. Ohmer reported that a successor to Jannifer Crittendon has been hired. Senior leadership recently participated in diversity training and there are plans to incorporate diversity into training for new department chairs in Fall 2013. Margaret Porter mentioned that the Library would like to participate in diversity training programs.

c. Staff interest in a women's committee: Prof. Ohmer reported that she has been contacted by a staff person about a committee similar to the UCWFS for staff; there is a staff committee that primarily plans social events for nonexempt staff. The staff person is interested in forming an exempt staff committee; Prof. Ohmer invited her to work with UCWFS to develop that plan.

- d. ND Women Connect newsletter: A member reported on the content of an ND Women Connect newsletter that her sister received as an alumna of ND. She described the content as focused on topics that were not particularly professional or career-oriented (the topics included information about washing vegetables, weddings, and springtime). She noted that the Chicago alumni newsletter has a strong 'mom' focus. The committee has begun to develop a partnership with the Alumni Office in an effort to implement engagement between campus and external ND stakeholders. Members feel this is an area where UCWFS's expertise might be brought into play.
- e. Women and leadership: Prof. Ohmer reported that Prof. Myers and Denise Murphy are continue to work on a revised leave policy. She is also aware of interest in one of the committee's priorities for this year, women and leadership. Members expressed an interest in helping with these initiatives.

Prof. Ohmer announced the upcoming retirement of committee member Margaret Porter, Hesburgh Libraries. She noted Ms. Porter's long and fruitful service to the university and to the committee, thanked her for her contributions, and congratulated her on behalf of the committee on her retirement.

Prof. Ohmer concluded the meeting by thanking members for their work and service to the committee and the university during this academic year. She noted that Kevin Barry will be returning to the committee, having won a 3-year term, and the group offered congratulations. Members thanked Prof. Ohmer for her service as chair of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Thomas, Recorder