**STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Meeting Minutes**

**October 19, 2023**

**International Pavilion**

* Katie Hill on behalf of Bekka Alvarado - Inclusive Excellence Action Plan
	+ Formerly referred to as the Diversity Strategic Plan
	+ 24 members comprised of staff, faculty, and both graduate and undergraduate students
		- Representing Flagstaff Mountain campus and Statewide campuses
	+ Just completed an environmental scan of DEI trends using PESTO analysis (**P**olitical, **S**ocietal, **T**echnological, and **O**rganizational analysis)
	+ Late October meeting will include SWOT analysis (**S**trengths, **O**pportunities, **W**eaknesses, **T**hreats), identifying initiatives, and form implementation teams
	+ Staff, faculty, and student listening sessions to follow in the spring
	+ Contact Bekka Alvarado with any questions (Bekka.Alvarado@nau.edu)
* Cristy Salanga – Patent Manager, Program Director for NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps)
	+ Learn how to be an entrepreneur with NSF Innovation Corps
	+ Sponsored by National Science Foundation
	+ What is the program
		- Entry level entrepreneurial training program started in 2012
		- Help nation become more technologically competitive
		- Promote innovation and society benefits
		- Base of the program is understanding customers
			* Discovering who the customer is, validating this base, creating the base if needed, and understanding company building
		- Two levels, regional training (what we are talking about today), national training is the next level up
	+ Desert & Pacific Region Hub, one of ten hubs across the US
		- Cristy is the Program Director for this hub
		- Includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, and Nevada and eight institutions within these states
	+ Regional Training specifics
		- Do not need previous business experience, all you need is an idea that could potentially solve a problem
		- Instructors will provide a structured curriculum in which you can investigate your idea
		- Customer discovery interviews
			* Learn who in your ecosystem might influence your idea and its market
			* Discover key insights about customer’s actual needs
		- Informal weekly presentations within the training group
		- Inspiration from other institutions
		- If you complete the regional program, you can receive up to $3000 in grant funding to continue working on your idea and become eligible for national program that offers a $50,000 grant
		- Some time commitment, five-week course – three-hour zoom meetings once a week and three-five hours per week for customer interviews, office hours, and interpreting customer needs
		- The program is free
	+ Many opportunities to join as it is a five-year grant with six sessions per year
	+ Next training dates announced shortly
	+ Check out [website](https://desertpacificicorps.org/) or reach out to Cristy.Salanga@nau.edu any time
* Laura Umphrey and KT Thompson - University Ombuds Program
	+ A place to go to talk with conflict management specialists
	+ Previously available just to faculty, now available to staff and graduate students as well
	+ Informal space where you can talk about what is happening
		- Not for formal grievance procedures like going through Equity and Access or Title IX
		- Everything is confidential; while notes are taken, they are not shared and will be disposed
		- Impartial, do not take sides
		- Brainstorm ideas on how to resolve the situation
	+ Independent office, not reporting directly to anyone representing the University
		- Publish annual report that talks about how many visitors they see, general nature of discussions brought up, a pulse of what is happening at the university
		- Example, if there is a problem they see occurring across different departments, it is systemic and they can report back on this without breaking confidentiality
	+ The general categories they can help with as outlined by the International Ombuds Association are compensation and benefits, supervisor/employee relationships, peer relationships, safety, making sure there is fair process, and ensuring policy is working for us and not hindering us
	+ Why consider visiting the Ombuds Office?
		- It is not healthy to continue venting about a situation without possible resolution
			* Going to your work neighbor can change culture and create an unhealthy work environment
			* It can cause increased stress which can
				+ Cause pain and inflammation
				+ Impact ability to communicate effectively
		- This office can help generate new ideas on how to interact with people that you are having conflict with
		- They offer individual consultations, facilitated group meetings, workshops, and help with systemic issues
	+ Laura’s background: she’s been at NAU for 21 years, PhD in Communication, professor of communication at NAU, teaches conflict resolution and mediation, mediator for Arizona Attorney General’s Office for five years, provided victim/offender, and previously the Director of the School of Communication and Dean for the College of Health and Human Services
		- Through this work, has a lens on what the staff world looks like, and continues to learn
	+ KT’s background: faculty in English at NAU for six years; formally an Inclusive Excellence Fellow
	+ Activity – Orange Story
		- Two kids come running in, both want the orange, what do you do as a parent?
		- You are parent of the year and you cut the orange in half, compromise, are they happy with you?
			* No, one kid wanted the orange peel for a cake and one kid wanted to make orange juice
			* What went wrong?
			* They did not get to participate in the decision
			* Position mindset – they each came to the situation with their own positions, and this can be stifling and narrowly defined; the solution may not always get you what you want
			* Explore the why behind the position as the why is the underlying reason, the motivation that people have, the hopes, concerns, desires, and worries
	+ To make an appointment call the office 928-523-8767, go to [website](https://in.nau.edu/university-ombuds-program/) and complete the form, email ombuds.office@nau.edu
	+ Questions:
		- Do you have to report anything out?
			* It is confidential, it is like it never happened
				+ They would report in cases of imminent harm to self or others
			* If you want Ombuds to help with facilitating conversations, they can do that, but it becomes less confidential
* Meagan Decker & Chris Kuhl – Benefits Office
	+ Open enrollment is between 10/30 – 11/17
	+ Yearly opportunity to change benefit selections without experiencing a qualifying life event
		- [Qualifying life events](https://in.nau.edu/human-resources/enrolling-in-benefits/): get married, have a baby, spouse changes jobs, turning 26 (off parent’s plan), etc.
	+ You do not need to act this year unless you want to make changes or enroll in FSA/HCSA
	+ You can change medical, dental, vision, HCSA and FSA account, and life & short-term disability
	+ What is changing
		- Visit What’s Changing for details on HR website
		- BCBSAZ PPO-deductibles for in and out of network, co-insurance, and premiums are all increasing
		- NAU high deductible plan-deductible increasing, premiums the same, NAU’s HSA contribution is increasing to make up increase in deductible
		- State medical plan-high deductible is only change, deductible increasing but no other changes
		- No changes to dental and vision
		- HSAs – IRS has increased maximum contributions you and NAU can contribute; you can change your contribution during this period but also at any time
		- Do not know if there are FSA contribution changes; usually released at the end of October
	+ Open Enrollment Events
		- November 6th Flagstaff Benefit Expo
		- Check out website for more information on events
	+ Make updates through Louie > Benefits > Benefits Enrollment
	+ If you have questions, you can email nauhrbenefits@nau.edu or call 928-523-2223
	+ Open Enrollment Central [website](https://in.nau.edu/human-resources/open-enrollment-4/)
* Lissa Gallegos – International Pavilion
	+ The International Pavilion is a gathering space and serves students
	+ Can hold meetings, retreats, and weddings!
		- Fee ranges from $50-175 depending on the size of the space for a four-hour interval
	+ Student space for student activities, groups, meetings at no charge up to two hours Monday – Friday
	+ If you need parking, call Parking Services
* Staff survey from the Center for Service & Volunteerism coming soon, looking to understand current levels of community engagement and how that relates to elevating excellence
* Thanks to our first North Valley watch party!
* Pulse check survey on staff clubs
* Congratulations to our SAC book scholarship recipients:
	+ Alyssa Burkett
	+ Naomi Campbell
	+ Tyler Conlon
	+ Jacquie Davis
	+ Jordan Macias
	+ Christine Ross