

Report from Staff Council for University Council meeting 03/18/10

The staff at the university has almost finished this year's mandated furloughs. Most of us have lost a significant amount of our pay. That coupled with health insurance rate increases has made life more difficult for all of us. We are not the highest paid group at the university or even in our job classifications based on salary levels statewide. We have lost hundreds of staff positions that we could not afford to lose. Our budgets had never recovered from the cuts they took a few short years ago. Pretty much all of us are now doing more work for less pay. And right now we see no end in sight for this situation.

Now the legislature is asking us to come up with more cuts. Do MORE work for even LESS money. And the approximately nine thousand staff working here are the muscles and blood of this institution. We may not teach the students, but we help make sure they get taught. We may not discover a cure for a disease but we help it get discovered. We may not help a farmer with his crops, but we make sure that farmer gets help. So cutting staff harms the university.

And we WORK at this university. Many of us have put years and years of our labor into this place because we believe that higher education is an investment in our state's future. That the future leaders of our state can come from this university and from other institutions in the system and can make the state a better place for US in a few years, for our children in a few years more and our children's children in the decades to come.

So now we want to say no more. We want to say no more cuts to staff salaries. No more removing positions vacated by departing personnel. No more to not having enough faculty and staff to do the crucial work that we are doing here for the benefit of our state. No more of telling young people who are paying their hard earned money to come here that we're sorry, we just can't do that for you. Our students deserve better. Our citizens deserve better. Our CHILDREN deserve better. We want to make sure that everyone understands that we believe in this university. We BELIEVE that we, the faculty, administration and the staff, are doing important work here.

And yes, we KNOW that that there is a serious money problem in the state. We just ask that all OTHER avenues for getting through these bad times are examined first. We want to hear that everyone in this state understands the importance of our work here and that this place IS an investment in the State of Georgia. That even in tough times you keep adding to your investment so that maybe there'll be fewer tough times in the future.

In the meantime, we'll keep working as hard as we ever have. And if more cuts come, we'll still try to keep providing our students with what they need from us so that they may become the best citizens we can produce for our state - the best doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, CEO's, veterinarians, writers, reporters, and all those other people we sometimes take for granted that received degrees from our institutions. We'll stand with this university's administration and keep working hard because we care about the future. We just ask that everyone else in the state care about it as much as each of us care about it.