Meeting was called to order by Paul Witten, Vice-Chair, at 1:05 p.m.

Members present: Katie Bell, Mickie Campos, Carrie Caumont, Molly Field, Debbie Hardy, Melody Kimball, Lindsey Love, Roger Mancastroppa, Keith Mitchell, Adrienne Piazza, Robert Plymale, Sadie Simmons, Ebony Smith, Marti Tomlin, Anna Kay Travis, Maya Vincelli, Blake Widdowson, Paul Witten

Members absent: Chantelle Bernard, Tracy Cassalia, Bill Chappell, Liz Chenery, Michele Cox, Lynn Robertson, Jerry Robinson,

Executive Board Update

Molly Field, Recording Secretary, thanked everyone for completing the online survey to gather availability for the March meeting which will be held at UR Downtown. Most everyone will take the shuttle and a few others are planning to drive. The schedule for the day is as follows:

12:00 noon – Meet at Transportation hub to catch shuttle to URD
12:30 – Arrive at URD
12:30-1 – Lunch
1-2:15 – USAC meeting which will include a tour of URD
2:25 – Meet bus to take us back to UR
3 – Arrive back on campus

Carrie Caumont, Affinity Group Chair, gave an update on the affinity groups. The parenting affinity group hosted a speaker from the Chaplaincy to discuss holiday mindfulness and how to better educate children on around other religious traditions. The Elder Care group had their monthly support group gathering and the Health & Wellness group held a session on surviving the holidays.

Roger Mancastroppa, Parliamentarian, reminded folks to join the nominating committee to help with USAC elections which will occur in March.

Program

Paul Witten, Vice Chair, welcomed Lisa Miles from Common Ground to the meeting. Lisa spoke about the plans for MLK Day, January 20, 2014. For the first time, this day will now be observed by the University—but she stressed that it will be “a day on, not a day off” meaning there are several ways you can engage in memory of Dr. King. There will be a breakfast, several service opportunities, a family day, and a civil rights bus tour through Richmond. USAC members are encouraged to attend and to send info out to their constituents.
Paul then welcomed Megan Zanella-Litke, Sustainability Manager, to the meeting. Megan presented to the group about the green office program. The program is a way for faculty and staff to become involved in conservation on campus. Through the program, offices pledge to take steps to reduce their carbon footprint by doing things as simple as printing double-sided, turning electronics off when not in use, not use bottled water, etc. Over 30 offices have become certified as green offices.

Paul then welcomed Martha Pittaway from Enrollment Management and Aubrey Pettaway from Human Resources to the meeting. Martha and Aubrey gave an update to the group on the mentoring program that was started last year by a USAC committee led by Martha. Martha and Aubrey reported that the program is currently being piloted with administrative support staff members on campus and is going well. Administrative staff that have been on campus for a while are paired with newer staff members so that they can mentor and answer questions. The hope is to expand the mentoring program to other kinds of staff members in the future.

Meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2014 in the International Commons.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Field, Recording Secretary

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Web Submissions

**Web Submission 1**

Submitted: November 13, 2013

“Hi USAC members, Since the holidays are approaching, I was wondering if USAC would be facilitating an "Angel Tree" this year. I would love to be involved but wasn't sure who to contact. It is such a heart-warming tradition. Thanks”

**Action Taken:**

November 13, 2013 – Reply by Paul Witten, USAC Vice Chair:

“We are partnering with Angel Tree again this year. The USAC webpage should have holiday information on there. Last year we set aside the option to have gifts from UR employees directly routed to UR families in need but none of the applicants from UR identified themselves as UR
staff. We partnered with angel tree to take the "command and control" out from under USAC but I am sure they are always grateful for volunteers. I will see who our point of contact is now.”

Web Submission 2  
Submitted: November 13, 2013
“I would like to suggest that HR make some checklists with instructions explaining how to use and update your benefits when going through a common life event like a birth, adoption, marriage, divorce, death of a family member, etc. Before and after the birth of my daughter in April, I visited, called or emailed HR about ten times re: parental leave policies and forms, insurance coverage, and changes to my FSA and other benefits. I think that having lists of tasks, with instructions, would save a lot of time for HR staff and for the employee who is experiencing some kind of life change. Having these tips in written form could also improve the consistency and accuracy of the information provided.”

Action Taken:  
November 13, 2013 – Web sub forwarded to Carl Sorenson  
November 13, 2013 – Reply by Carl Sorenson:  
“It is a good idea and one we will work toward. Please let this person know that I welcome ideas for ways we can provide better service.”

Web Submission 3  
Submitted: November 15, 2013
“I don't understand why two of the three employee benefit fairs took place during the last three days of open enrollment. The benefit fairs ought to take place prior to open enrollment, or at least during the first week. The fairs are opportunities to interact with the various benefit representatives and ask questions. Employees need time to do research, speak to spouses/family members, and make informed decisions. I request that open enrollment occur at least a week after the last benefits fair. Thank you.”

Action Taken:  
November 15, 2013 – Forwarded to Carl Sorenson  
December 10, 2013 – Reply by Carl Sorenson:  
“Many years ago the benefit fairs were not on the last day of OE but participation has always been low for the fairs held earlier in the process. Our experience is that it is beneficial to have benefit fairs during both weeks of open enrollment with more the second week. It has proven to be very beneficial to have the vendors onsite the last day of OE because many employees wait until the last day to ask questions about their benefits. During the first week of open enrollment, 400 employees completed the online enrollment leaving over 1,000 to complete it during the second week. 500 of those 1,000 waited until the last two days to complete the open enrollment process. We would be very appreciative if more employees attended benefit fairs and information sessions and completed the process earlier but that isn’t the current reality.

Every year we begin the Open Enrollment communication process before the enrollment period begins. This allows employees to do research and ask questions before to the two week online
period. In addition Laura always schedules open meetings with some of the vendors so employees may learn about any new benefits as well as ask questions about their current benefits. This year we offered meetings on October 29th, 30th and 31st with representatives from Anthem, Anthem vision, Cigna and Bon Secours. Based on feedback she heard at these sessions Laura added a session during each benefit fair to address the High Deductible Health plan. Next year she will hold the high deductible meetings before Open Enrollment starts as well.

Normally the first benefit fair is not as well attended as the last two. This year we had a larger attendance at the first fair because Laura was able to negotiate and offer free flu shots. And, you can always ask a benefit related question any time of the year - before, during and after open enrollment - by calling URHR (8747) or emailing urhr@richmond.edu.”

Web Submission 4  
Submitted: December 3, 2013  
“We've had winter celebrations that have paid homage to penguins, owls, and Willie Wonka...Any chance Christmas could get a turn next year?”

Action Taken:  
December 10, 2013 – Discussed at USAC meeting and USAC offers the following response:

“The University of Richmond values the diversity of voices, cultures, and beliefs that are present on the campus both among our students and among our faculty and staff. The Winter Celebration is just that—an event to celebrate the winter season and the end of the semester. The Events Office goes to great lengths to plan the event and intentionally chooses a theme that is broad, celebratory, and inclusive. The intent is for all faculty and staff to feel welcome.

Students, faculty, and staff members that wish to celebrate Christmas, or any other religious holiday, can find opportunity through the Office of the Chaplaincy’s holiday events and services. For more information about the Chaplaincy and their offerings, please visit chaplaincy.richmond.edu.”