

IOWA

*Staff Council
Presidential Update |
2025–26 Year-End
Review*

Neda Barrett

Staff Council President



Key Areas

Belonging and Recognition

Foster a culture where everyone feels valued and empowered.

- Recognize and celebrate contributions
- Promote a positive, supportive environment for all
- Support every voice and individual

Prioritizing Work-Life Balance & Well-Being

Staff well-being is not optional – it's essential.

- Advocate for flexible work options where possible
- Embed well-being into our culture

Investing in Professional Growth & Retention

Invest in our people to strengthen our future.

- Prioritize staff retention & development
- Leverage existing talent for improved service
- Support staff with meaningful initiatives

Enhancing Communication & Transparency

Transparent communication builds trust and collaboration.

- Improve Information sharing across campus.
- Make Staff Council efforts visible, accessible, and responsive.

Building Strategic Partnerships for Impact

Align actions with our mission and long-term impact.

- Work collaboratively with university leadership, faculty partners, student organizations, & external stakeholders
- Grow Strategically, Act Thoughtfully; Support the university in creating operational efficiencies

Fostering Belonging and Recognition

Launched the Staff Appreciation Grant,

providing funding to departments to recognize staff through events, team-building activities, and appreciation initiatives. The grant recipients will also be celebrated the institutional awards ceremony at Hancher.

Highlighted **lesser-known employee benefits** to increase awareness and appreciation of total rewards and help recruit and retain staff and advocated for centralized location on [UI website](#).

Published **55 articles across 7 newsletters**, featuring **8 Staff Spotlights** and **6 Wellness Heroes** highlighting staff contributions and key initiatives

Record engagement: 538.5 volunteer hours | 68% participation | 46 events
Supporting campus and community through expanded volunteer efforts.

→ **Impact:** Strengthen staff engagement, recognition, and sense of belonging while increasing awareness of employee resources and fostering a more connected and appreciative workplace culture.

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Staff Council Volunteer Impact | March 2025 - February 2026

538.5



Total Volunteer Hours

68%



Councilors Participated

46



Volunteer Events Supported



Health & Well-Being Impact

750 lbs. of food collected + monetary donations

Nearly doubled last year's total, supporting the campus food pantry and employees in need.

1,083 attendees | 46 vendors | 8,000+ interactions

Sponsored the Health & Well-Being Fair, connecting employees to wellness resources and programs.

Supported campus well-being initiatives and programming

Promoting awareness, connection, and employee wellness, including the Pecha Kucha event on mental health.

Launched a staff-focused Civic Dialogue initiative

Creating space for respectful conversations and supporting a positive workplace culture.

→ **Impact:** Expanded engagement and access to wellness resources, strengthening staff well-being, and community impact.



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Investing in Professional Growth and Retention

Partnered with University HR to enhance the **performance review process and website**, improving clarity, usability, and alignment with policy.

Facilitated ongoing discussions on **career advancement and review practices** with HR leadership.

Hosted presentations on **salary policies, career pathways, and total compensation**, helping staff make more informed career decisions.

Expanded opportunities for staff engagement
Increasing participation in high-level searches, volunteer efforts, committee service, and leadership interaction.

→ **Impact:** Support staff development and retention by improving access to career resources, increasing transparency around advancement opportunities, and creating more meaningful pathways for engagement and leadership involvement across campus.

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Investing in Staff: Staff Council Impact

Impact: Over \$63,000 invested in staff through recognition, development, and well-being initiatives

\$15,000

Mary Jo Small Fellowship

Supports staff professional development through funding for conferences, workshops, and learning opportunities that enhance skills, growth, and career advancement.

\$23,570

Staff Appreciation Grants

Provides funding to departments to recognize and celebrate staff through appreciation events, team-building activities, and local engagement efforts.

\$14,000

Staff Council Awards

Recognizes outstanding staff contributions and achievements, highlighting individuals who make a meaningful impact across the University.

\$8,000

Health & Well-Being Fair

Supports a campus-wide event promoting employee wellness, offering resources, screenings, and connections to programs that enhance overall well-being.

\$4,700

Strategic Fund Allocation

Provides flexible funding to support emerging priorities, strategic initiatives, and opportunities that align with Staff Council's mission and impact.

Enhancing Communication & Transparency

Achieved a 43% average open rate
reflecting strong and consistent staff engagement across all newsletters

Established **Council Corner** as a dedicated forum during meetings to gather and elevate staff feedback, concerns, and ideas.

Expanded communication reach through The Loop platform
Increasing visibility and access to Staff Council updates for UI Health Care staff.

Elevated staff recognition through storytelling and engagement
including Hawkeye High-Five, supporting **1,321 nominations** across 4 newsletters

→ **Impact:** Strengthened communication effectiveness by increasing engagement, highlighting staff contributions, and improving access to key information across campus.



Martin Gallardo, Wellness Hero



Elizabeth Holm, Wellness Hero

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Advocacy in Action
Your Voice for a Better UI

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Building Strategic Partnerships for Impact

1,638 total meeting attendees

demonstrating strong staff engagement and participation across Staff Council meetings

Hosted 49 campus and community guests providing staff direct access to university leadership, partners, and subject matter experts

Completed 8 local staff council visits strengthening connections, visibility, and two-way communication across campus units

Advocated for Medical Center Downtown staff concerns including visibility, resources, and operational challenges shared with leadership

→ **Impact:** Strengthened staff connection to leadership and campus initiatives through consistent engagement, outreach, and accessible communication opportunities.

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