Staff Assembly Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2025

**HR Updates – Darcy Vangel**

* Health insurance changes are coming in the new fiscal year
* Context: Insurance rates across the higher education industry are increasing
* Nichols was faced with a few options –
  + Nichols can look at new plans at competing companies
    - Undesirable as it impacted coverage of physicians amongst employees
    - Still would be around a 20% increase
  + Nichols can look at plan modifications
* Neither option was compelling, therefore:
  + The plan as it is, appears to be really important to people. Our coverage is really good and is being taken advantage of, so our coverage is going to stay the same
* No modifications will be made to the plan (good news)
* Increase in rate from below 10% to 28% (bad news)
* However, the college will absorb the majority of the cost, but employees will still see a 10% rate increase
* There will be no changes to dental or vision coverage or cost
* Open enrollment is May 1 – May 31
  + Passive enrollment – enrollment in benefits automatically roll over
  + However, you can still go in and make any changes!
* Employee Appreciation Day – May 9
  + Email coming this week with more information
  + Theme: Escape Room
    - Plan to form teams of 6 people

**Vendor Change Update – Bob LaVigne**

* Switching from Coke to Pepsi
* Coke has been difficult from a service perspective – value was not delivering
* Conversations also took place with Polar – couldn’t deliver what we needed
* Pepsi had a strong proposal
  + Much stronger product line up beyond sodas – Gatorades, Celsius, etc.
* This will be rolled out in May
  + All vending, retail, and dining halls will be updated

**New Student Onboarding – Brynn Stevens**

* Please review the attached PPT to learn about the new student onboarding process

**End of Year Events/Ceremonies and Senior 48 – Cari Cyr**

* Monday, April 21 – First Generation Ceremony
* Thursday, April 24 – Bison Giveback Day
* Friday, April 25 – Bison Quad Stampede
* Saturday, April 26 – Spring Concert
* Wednesday, April 30 – May 2 – Senior 48
* Friday, May 2 - Baccalaureate
* Saturday, May 3 – Commencement!
* New Student Orientation
  + 70 students signed up so far!
  + Looking for faculty and staff volunteers – see Cari’s email

**Sound Healing Meditation Event – Nora Cavic**

* Thursday, April 17th – Sound Healing Meditation Event
  + Right before finals!
  + For students, staff, and faculty – everyone is welcome!
  + Held in the IWL from 7 – 8pm or 8 – 9pm
  + No need to sign up in advance

**Staff Council Nominations & Summer Events – Janet Newman**

* Staff council nominations close this Friday, April 18
* Elections will be held after Commencement (May 12 – May 15)
* Winners will be notified during the week of June 9th
* Those who have been nominated by someone else will be notified before being put on the ballot to ensure they accept the nomination
* Looking to coordinate staff events throughout the summer
  + Examples: A behind-the-scenes campus tour by facilities, residence hall tours, walking club, book club, etc.
  + Looking for more ideas – please contact Staff Council with any ideas

**Event Reminders:**

* Sound Healing Meditation Event 🡪 Thursday, April 17 from 7 – 9pm in IWL
* Bison Give Back Day 🡪 Thursday, April 24 (after Commencement rehearsal clap out in front of Daniels Auditorium)
* Don’t forget to volunteer for Commencement on May 3rd! Contact Maureen Butler
* Employee Appreciation Day – Friday, May 9
* May Staff Assembly – Wednesday, May 21
* New Student Orientation
  + Session 1: June 11 – 12
  + Session 2: June 16 – 17
  + Session 3: June 21 – 22

**General Reminders:**

* If you know a graduating senior, please ask them if they have RSVP’ed for Commencement and Baccalaureate
  + Tell them to check their emails from [Commencement@nichols.edu](mailto:Commencement@nichols.edu)
* Please fill out the IT Satisfaction survey!
* Summer Housing is available for a weekly fee – students must contact Residence Life
  + All summer housing for students will be in Budleigh, all other residence halls will be used by conferences