

September 14, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dave Frohnmayer, President
Andrew Marcus, President, University Senate
Dan Williams, Vice President for Administration

FROM: Child Care and Family Support Committee
Prepared by Stephanie Bosnyk, Deb Casey and Karen Logvin

SUBJECT: 2003-2004 Annual Report

The Child Care and Family Support Committee ends this year pleased by several concrete achievements and determined to open next year with a strong start to ensure progress towards several goals. The committee's efforts contributed to several notable accomplishments:

- Completion and initial distribution of a new UO campus family-friendly map
- Completion and occupation of the Moss Street Children's Center
- Commitment by the Health Center to include a lactation room in its remodel
- A stronger relationship with PARS and improved programming for families
- Improved benefits for the transfer of staff tuition rates to dependents: increased to 12 credits
- Completion of a collection of "Family Friendly Practices at the UO."

We also want to commend several departments for family-friendly practices: the Department of Theater Arts for initiating a new ticketing system that offers reduced prices for children; the Child and Family Center for collaborating with Work and Family Services to provide workshops for the university community; PARS and the University Health Center for collaborating with Work and Family Services to provide workshops for student parents; and the Craft Center for its welcoming inclusion of family members in many of its activities. The Knight Library also provided a model for inclusiveness last year when access to cards was enlarged and made much simpler.

The University's effort to maintain the current level of support for child care and family services is appreciated in these difficult financial times. The committee commends the university for its commitment to developing family-friendly initiatives such as staff and dependent tuition rates and informational workshops, as well as its significant commitment of space to lactation rooms, child care, and other family-related activities. This visibility is important to us.

On the disappointing side, our committee had less focused energy this year than usual. In part, we see this as linked to membership and want to emphasize again how important it is to have tenure-track members named to the committee. We need all campus constituencies, including professors and students, to be represented as we work on strategies that recognize the importance of family responsibilities and create a supportive work environment.

This report summarizes the most important issues addressed by the Child Care and Family Support Committee during the past year and includes several recommendations.

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

UO-Affiliated Child Care

This year, all three of the university-affiliated child-care centers: the Vivian Olum Child Development Center, the Co-op Family Center at Spencer View, and the EMU Child Care and Development Centers were awarded NAEYC Academy Accreditation. A division of the National Association of Early Childhood Education, the Academy administers a national, voluntary, professionally sponsored accreditation system. After a rigorous year-long application process, those chosen join the national elite of early childhood programs. Currently, there are about 8,000 accredited programs nationally, and only five programs in Lane County, three of them being UO-affiliated, which is quite an accomplishment! We credit this achievement to several factors: 1) the value the institution places on meeting high standards of care in all its units, 2) in-kind and financial assistance offered by the institution, 3) the quality of directors and teachers and their commitment to collaboration, and 4) input and support from this committee and Human Resources' Work and Family Services program. The committee is pleased that the UO-affiliated Child Care Directors' Consortium continues to meet regularly. In 2003-04 their focus on the transportation of school-age children and collaborative training increased the range of their ability to serve well a larger population—a direction we commend.

We are also pleased to note enormous changes for the EMU Child Care and Development Centers. The most significant was the completion and move into the new Moss Street Children's Center building that began serving children at the beginning of winter term. The new Moss Street Children's Center, in addition to Housing programs previously operated in several buildings, includes expanded service for infant and school age children, primarily for student families.

CCDC continues to operate Westmoreland Children's Center within Westmoreland Family Housing. This year, a formal agreement with Housing, which clarifies respective responsibility for these facilities, was finalized. Housing now officially provides rent-free space, maintenance and utilities for these facilities.

The maintenance and utility costs for the new building on Moss Street, however, must now be included in the Centers' child-care budget. These were previously covered by the University and EMU Facilities budgets. The burden on parents and fees will only increase as warranties expire and the building ages. This problem in generating adequate revenue must be addressed. Solutions need to be explored—soon, not later!

McKenzie Parent and Baby Co-op and the PLC Family Resource Room are furnished, equipped and continue to serve the needs of several families. A lactation support space is planned for the University Health Center. These contributions of space remain an economical and valuable way to help address the varied needs of campus parents and children, especially infant needs where the costs for center-based care can be prohibitive and need exceeds availability.

GOAL: The demand for care for infants and young children has inspired a project, which has begun, to collect information on program use, parents' requests and specific child-care needs for children under the age of three.

PARS Family Member Use

Physical Activity and Recreation Services has taken numerous positive steps that answer some of the concerns the committee has voiced about limited family use of PARS resources. They have established a new staff position to coordinate the Family Recreation Program and met with both the committee and the Non-traditional Student Union Advisory Board to brainstorm ways to increase participation. As a student-driven center, PARS is working with the Non-traditional Student Union to place a student representative on their Advisory Board. The committee commends PARS for their work in helping address the needs of families.

RECOMMENDATION/GOAL: We strongly recommend that PARS continue to support family access to the Student Recreation Center through extended hours to provide families with greater flexibility. We recommend that dialogue continue regarding the culture that is created in this space and to identify ways that it can be welcoming to all segments of the student body.

Graduate Student Family Issues Advocate

The GTF Graduate Student Family Issues Advocate made significant strides this year in the development of services to graduate students with families. Developments included creating a campus-wide subscribed list-serve for student parents with weekly information on campus and community family-related programs, services and events; a graduate student parent and family support group which met quarterly, providing the opportunity for socialization and discussion of issues; several workshops and a class series on parenting facilitated by the UO Child and Family Center; and a successful collaboration with PARS Family Program resulting in an organized family swim night for student parent families.

We commend the Graduate School for its ongoing commitment to fund this position and Human Resources Work and Family Services for its facilitation and guidance for this important GTF position.

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE AND FLEXIBLE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Because of the movement of CCDC to Moss Street, we were concerned about a loss of visibility of children and families in the central campus area. As remodeling of the EMU was undertaken, we appreciated the opportunity to voice our opinion on reallocation of space and the importance of including the interests of families and children. We are pleased that the EMU Board was receptive to our concerns and included family-friendly considerations in their decision-making. This level of consciousness should be part of all UO decision-making.

Deans, Directors and Department Heads, who are responsible for adopting successful strategies for family support according to UO Personnel Practices Policy 3.02, were asked in March 2002, to share their strategies. Their responses, supplemented by individual stories gathered through a comprehensive outreach effort, contain both inspiring personal testimonies and exemplary practices. Since that time, additional examples also have been collected in a document designed to present ways that faculty and staff have successfully balanced family and work responsibilities. A final draft of the collection is complete and we await approval and decisions on its distribution.

RECOMMENDATION: We request that the administration fund and facilitate full distribution of this resource, The Family-Friendly Practices Collection.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AND FUNDING

Reductions of funds in the federal fiscal 2003 budget for the Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CCAMPIS) meant an end to the University's grant from this source. The result was higher costs to low-income student parents who need child care to attend the University.

Simultaneously, the reductions in state budgets led to the elimination of Student Block Grant assistance to this same population. The EMU Child Care Coordinator has begun to serve as a member of the state Early Childhood Care and Education Coordinating Council in a continuing effort to advocate for the needs of student parents. The ASUO Child Care Subsidy program has continued to help a limited number of student families pay their child care bills at in-campus and community child care settings.

It is hoped the University will continue its advocacy for all initiatives that provide assistance for University families needing quality child-care services.

RECOMMENDATIONS: We ask that the university continue to advocate in both the federal and Oregon legislative arenas for enhanced funding to help make student child-care services available. This is essential to student-parents' ability to attend the UO and sustain their enrollment and involvement in UO studies and activities.

Also, we continue to be concerned about the cost of child care for parents, including younger tenure-track faculty and classified staff, who cannot afford the high costs of care, especially infant care. We strongly recommend the development of the Endowed Fund for Child Care Assistance for Faculty and Staff and have recommended that it be part of the Capital Campaign. We ask that this be fully supported and the Committee be informed of the status of this proposal by the opening of the new academic year.

Staff Tuition Rates for Family

In a two-year pilot program the Oregon University System (OUS) Board expanded the staff tuition-rate benefit to include family members. This new opportunity has benefited all constituencies within the institution. We also appreciate the efforts to extend the reduced-cost benefit to cover a full-time, 12-credit load and recommend that both be maintained. Although a beneficial program, anecdotally we know that unexamined issues and limitations complicate participation in this program. We want to know how to inform and influence the decision makers regarding this program and we ask that when this benefit is next assessed, we be included in conversations about implementation and guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION: We ask that the committee be educated as to how to participate in the statewide dialogue about the future of this important benefit.

The Child Care and Family Support Committee has been an engaged and productive group since its inception as a Task Force in 1986. Over the past seventeen years, the responsiveness of central administration has been key to our progress in keeping family-well-being connected to the institution's good health. We thank you for your support

cc. Anne Leavitt, Vice-President for Student Affairs
Gwen Steigelman, Secretary, University Senate