Staff Senate Candidates

Area 1

Josh Boone

I served in a similar position while at the University of North Carolina. My boss is also requesting someone from the Business Office in athletics pursue this.

Kacie Dohrmann

As a DU alumna and former volleyball student-athlete, I feel indebted to the University and the life it positioned me for. I am incredibly inspired and grateful to be back on campus and begin positively impacting the institution that first invested in me. I am passionate about developing young adults into leaders and feel that student-athletes are a perfect example of living out the 4D experience. As the University wide campaign publicly commences, I think it is essential for top-down alignment and want athletics to be represented in the discussion. Athletics can be the front porch of the University and an incredible enhancement to the student experience through collaboration and partnership across campus. The buzz on campus, with our alumni and in the community is palpable when our teams are competing for championships. As the best DI athletics program without football, we can lean into our tradition of excellence and further propel the entire University. As a Staff Senator, I would bring a unique perspective as an alumna and former student-athlete who also worked in advancement at an elite, private institution in the Power 5 for nearly a decade.

Angel Field

Serving as a staff senator and representing Athletics I would share a voice to align with the overall University mission while representing my peers in the athletic to provide a different perspective & competitive spirit to senate. We should all feel a sense of pride as employees of DU and make that sense of this known each day. What steps will we take to instill this since of pride in our community? You must listen & learn to make sound decisions for the good of the community. As a staff, some concerns related to DU as a whole might be building that sense of pride mentioned above, increasing involvement and/or engagement - sharing our sense of pride beyond DU, exploring new opportunities for employees for the betterment of all. I will advocate needs/concerns of Athletics with an open mind and positive spirit. Athletics wants to tell the story of our entire university community. Academics, new innovation, expanding our brand & awareness, or being shoulder to shoulder cheering at a game we have the ability to expose DU's greatness to a diverse audience. Strengths -Lead & direct with passion, considerate decision making, stewardship, motivated and driven, collaboration.

Area 2
Jennifer Beach Anderson

I have been a DU staff member since 2010, working in four different departments. I have collaborated across units to build innovative process improvements. I enjoy working at DU because of the people, both strong professional relationships and meaningful friendships. I want to be a Staff Senator because I believe that collaboration across functional groups builds employee engagement and adds value to the institution. My concerns related to the staff experience include (1) employee engagement around performance, promotions, and scope creep of job duties; (2) leveraging available technology and training to improve processes and keep all departments as current as possible; and (3) leveraging the leadership development resources we offer our students to improve leadership skills among our own staff. Advocating for all these areas begins with collaborating across functional units. The resources we need are already on campus. The next step is connecting and coordinating, which is a strength I bring to my candidacy as a Staff Senator. I build functional, collaborative teams by reaching across barriers and building engaging and fun projects.

Jason Jackson

I'd like to be a staff senator because I want to be a voice for everyone in Area 2, to be an advocate for process improvements and improved working conditions which not only add to our general well-being but improve productivity as well. My No. 1 priority would be to address the "Great Disconnect" on campus since the pandemic, where new faculty, staff, and even administrators who started during and after the global crisis weren't afforded the same on-campus socialization and networking opportunities as those who started before -- too many people walk into positions now with no knowledge of who to reach out to for peer coaching and mentoring. My biggest strength is that I have more than 15 years in higher education, with 10 years' experience on the academic side of the house at Miami University working in University Libraries administration and five years here in FMP.

William “Bill” Scott

I've worked at the University of Denver for 12 years. In that time I've had many conversations with staff. I'd like to become a staff senator to continue having those conversations and use them to give staff more voice and open broader dialogue with the University leadership groups. In my experience, perspective is important to all staff members. If the perspective is someone feels integral to the running of the University, then they tend to be happier and more productive. I want to try to help staff members feel this way. Learning about someone's perspective allows others to see things in a different way. If you can see things from a different perspective than what you're used to, then the foundation for change has been laid and can be built upon for the betterment of the whole. I feel that I can bring a strong effort to listen and understand what staff members need, then share them with the staff senate and work to promote appropriate change though shared perspective. This works the other way too. Sometimes bringing the University's perspective back to the staff can also help foster understanding and change as well. Sometimes it's just the extra communication that matters.
Area 3

Gloria Bokenkamp

Having been at the University for over 12 years, I've seen great work done by the SAC (I served for one term), but it was always obvious that there was room to grow and many concerns that weren't addressed for a variety of reasons. The Staff Senate is appealing to me because it levels the playing field between the faculty and staff. Finally, a more formal process will be available for concerns to be addressed and taken seriously. I hope to be able to advocate for Advancement by listening and gathering information. Many of my Advancement colleagues come to me with work-related questions because they know me and they know I've been here for a while, so I've already established relationships within the team. I think my institutional knowledge, the various roles I've held, and my desire to see the staff experience at DU continue to improve will help me as a Staff Senator. Thank you!

Meg Dimsa

My desire to be a staff senator stems from my experiences at Georgetown University, where I served on both the faculty and staff senate (Vice President). I am passionate about representing and advocating for staff needs and concerns. I see the staff senate as a critical platform for ensuring that the voices of staff members are heard and addressed in larger university decisions. My main priorities are around enhancing the staff experience in terms of professional development, work-life balance, and inclusivity. I intend to focus on initiatives that promote continuous learning, career growth opportunities, and equitable practices that recognize the diverse backgrounds and needs of our staff. Additionally, I hope to work hard to break down silos and ensure alignment across the university. My approach to advocacy is grounded in active listening, collaborative engagement, and strategic communication. I plan to regularly engage with staff members to understand their perspectives and challenges.

Rosalyn Feagins

I'd humbly nominate myself to serve as a staff senator for Area 3. Service would allow an opportunity to participate at the grass root level to help develop ideas and strategies on behalf of staff. My priorities center on having a vibrant engaged staff who are committed to lifting up their coworkers, the community and the University of Denver as a leading insitution of higher learning. I am committed to transparency, ongoing communications and collaboration with my peers, but would underscore the intentionality if serving as a Senator by committing to meeting with all areas to hear their voices and elevate their successes, concerns and opportunities to appropriate levels. My strengths for the job are based in my 100% commitment to DUs future, my tenure of 23 years and having served with integrity in any situation to which I have been privileged to do so. Thank you for the consideration and I look forward to working alongside my colleagues in service to our outstanding staff here at the University of Denver. In solidarity, Roz

Jon Kraus
I want to be a staff senator because I care deeply about the University of Denver. As an alumnus for 23 years and a staff member for 10.5 years, DU has had a profound impact on my life and career, and I want to continue giving back. I believe staff play a critical role in moving the University forward. It is vital that we have a voice in governance in order to attract and retain the highest quality people. The priorities I would like to see addressed are: 1) Ensuring everyone has the resources and support they need to do their best work every day; 2) Creating a system of performance management that adequately recognizes and rewards outstanding work; and 3) Creating meaningful connections amongst staff to help everyone have a sense of belonging to, and ownership of, DU. I plan to hold office hours and set up a system whereby staff in my area can submit anonymous suggestions. I also plan to report back to staff in my area to update them on the progress of various initiatives. My current role requires that I am highly collaborative, both within Advancement and across campus, and I hope to bring that same sense of collaboration and collegiality to my work in the Senate.

Jackalynn Mayfield

I have been working as a member of Student Affairs & Inclusive Excellence since December 2021. Since starting here, I have seen a lot of opportunity. I have also seen a lot of despondency. I acknowledge the risk in staff to advocating for themselves, their staff, and even students. I am willing to take on risk and elevate the voices of my peers who feel that speaking up could jeopardize them. I will use my pragmatic lens to encourage more allocation of resources towards supporting staff. My strengths are enshrined in compassion. My priorities related to staff experience is a seemingly collective yield to the machine of bureaucracy. Of all the schools I have worked at, this one has the most money, capital, power, and expertise in it's tool belt. It is also has been the most challenging university I have seen in relation to staff taking care of themselves while also centering students in the work. My division is dedicated to student development, and yet, I often recognize how we ignore what we know about student needs. Our focus is rarely on what is best for students, but instead, what is best for donors, leadership, and reputation at the mercy of hierarchy. It's time for change.

Kendra Richard

I would like to be a Staff Senator to make sure the voices of my department, my division, and the neurodiverse students we serve are heard and valued by the entire university. My priorities and concerns are that our departmental needs are met, and that I can provide representation for LEP staff, both full time and benefitted staff (1.0 and .75 positions), part-time staff, and student employees that serve our department. I plan to advocate for our department staff and students by bringing our departmental needs to the table, and making sure that we are given both a seat at the table and that our needs and departmental concerns are given consideration across the University moving forward. The strengths that I bring to the Staff Senate in this role would be that I can speak to the needs of neurodiverse students or students with disabilities at DU, which 1 in 5 students at DU are registered with SDS, and many are also enrolled in the LEP. I hope to bring light to the needs of our students, but also UDL, the learning and accessibility needs of all students at DU, and the departmental needs of
Brent Thompson

Having been at DU more than 10 years, I have had the good fortune of building tremendous relationships across campus. I have adopted and maintained a One DU mindset even before this became a popular saying. If you ask around the teams I have served, each person would tell you I have one of the best sets of ears and I listen to understand and not to respond. I have always been an advocate for others whether that has been on the employee or the volunteers I serve in my current role. Too often the employees that pour their heart and soul into this institution are not celebrated enough or we do not take the time to celebrate the wins. In some cases the people that have served DU for a year are celebrated in the same PowerPoint slide with the people that have been here for 5, 10 or even 20-year milestones. My biggest concern is how we can celebrate the amazing staff while building a culture of connecting people across campus. Whether elected to serve on this board or not, I will continue to be an advocate for time and talent as ways to celebrate and honor staff. Lastly, this is the era of creativity. What are the creative ways to retain, educate, and celebrate staff. Staff sabbatical?

Jeremy Wu

I am enthusiastic about serving as a Staff Senator at DU to actively contribute to addressing critical concerns affecting the staff experience. My primary priorities include advocating for pay equity to ensure fair compensation, enhancing retention strategies to foster a stable workforce, optimizing benefits to meet diverse needs, promoting robust professional development opportunities, and ultimately elevating the overall employee experience. With a keen understanding of these issues and a commitment to inclusivity, I aim to be a strong advocate for policies that create a positive and supportive work environment for all staff members. My strengths lie in effective communication, collaboration, and problem-solving, which will enable me to engage constructively with colleagues and administration, fostering a collective effort to enhance the staff experience at DU.

Area 4

Dan Fischer

I am a highly motivated and effective leader with over 10 years of proven success leading cross-functional technical teams, strategy, and team building. As a staff senator, I will use these skills to listen to the needs across my represented units, as well as the other collaborative senators to raise issues, discover problems, and offer proposals for solutions to be discussed and improved with my partners in the Senate. I am an advocate for representing the quiet, sharing the voice with all in order to gain and include perspectives different from my own, and choosing to start with trust and respect both given and not earned. I am known for creative improvements and process engineering, passionate about
leadership, and people/team development, and am skilled at using a strategic mindset to build and foster growth in every department I have had the privilege to lead. I feel in the Senate this type of leadership mindset will be useful in creating a safe and empowered space to forward the goals of the Senate initiatives, as well as advocating for areas for which I will have the privilege to speak on behalf of and represent.

Natalie Gregg

1. I am eager to serve as a staff senator because I am deeply committed to fostering a positive and inclusive work environment at DU. Throughout my time as a staff member, I have witnessed the impact that effective leadership can have on the overall staff experience and want to provide the same. 2. My top priorities are centered around creating a supportive and collaborative atmosphere for all staff members. I am particularly concerned about issues such as professional development opportunities and staff representation across the board. 3. I plan to advocate for the needs and concerns of the staff by establishing open lines of communication with my fellow staff members. I will actively seek feedback to ensure that I accurately represent the diverse perspectives within our community. 4. One of my key strengths is my ability to listen and empathize with others. I believe that by understanding the diverse perspectives within the staff community, I can better represent their interests in the Senate. Additionally, my experience in our unit’s Staff Advocacy Team has equipped me with the problem-solving skills necessary to navigate complex issues.

Ross Logan

My name is Ross Logan and I want to be part of the inaugural class of DU Staff Senators because I believe in the power of Higher Ed and the value we provide to our students and society as a whole. But in order to provide that value, we have to make sure our staff are taken care of, meaning providing a great place to work where voices are heard & your needs are met. As a graduate of MSU's Higher Ed Admin masters program, I know the variety of complex challenges staff members may face on a day to day basis just trying to get the job done. The intersection of a dwindling budget & concerned supervisors shouldn't mean that you have a worse experience. The amount of work does not change just because there are less people to do it. I want to make sure you have the tools & the support you need to be successful, and that means having the right person in your corner as your advocate. If you elect me, I want to be that advocate. I will hold regular office hours to hear your concerns. I want to make sure DU is a fair and safe place to work. And beyond those minimum standards, as your senator, I will push DU even further. Thank you for your time, and I hope you consider me as your senator.

Linda Newman

I joined DU in September 2018, becoming part of a new group, KIHA, which is where I have remained. Due to the small nature of KIHA, I have felt isolated, even after merging with RSECS in 2022. I love my role here at DU & I want to learn more about the school and how I can contribute. I feel it is vital that staff and the staff experience are continually improved. To
that end, I feel my diverse background of 30+ years of accounting, finance, HR, and Change Management, would provide me with an excellent foundation to contribute to the Staff Senate and the staff experience. These strengths will allow me to understand what the staff issues are, make sure staff concerns are being heard, advocate for my team, and provide all staff with a connection. I think the Staff Senate plays a vital role in establishing and maintaining the DU culture. But culture does not just happen, it needs to be guided; I would like to be part of the team guiding the DU staff culture. I believe many of the staff members are siloed within their lines of work, and within their units. One of my priorities with the staff experience is to empower employees to meet others outside of their silos and units.

Area 5

Melissa DeWitt

Staff across this area have ideas, issues, and needs that deserve amplification. As a Staff Senator, I will advocate for the initiatives and issues that staff care about, ensuring our voices are heard, that our skills and experiences are valued, and that we are given pathways to thrive and grow. I love collaborating with others and have experience with shared governance and working across employee groups. I am passionate about fostering a work environment that is welcoming, cares for and values employees, and is innovative. To achieve this, I'm interested in addressing staff compensation, including base pay, merit, pay equity, and cost of living; job progression, development, and promotional pathways; updated job titles and descriptions; and reasonable and balanced workloads for all roles. It is important for an Area Senator to solicit feedback from staff across all departments in the area and represent both commonalities and differences in our priorities. I plan to collaborate with fellow Area Senators to communicate updates and be available both virtually and in person to connect with staff on a regular basis. It would be a privilege to represent staff in Area 5!

Ilona Kovacs

I am interested in representing my division as Staff Senator because of my previous experience serving the University of Denver student populations both as Graduate Student Government President and as DU Programming Board President. As a two-time graduate and recent hire of the university, I have a tremendous passion for pushing for impactful changes to improve the quality of everyone's experiences at our campus. I am a strong communicator and leader ready to be the voice of my team. My marketing and communications role within my division has a hand in every program we offer. This puts me in front of many positions from part-time employees to program managers to directors for conversations on how best to share the work they do as well as the pain points they may face on a daily basis or even larger scale situations.

Alexandria Vasquez Parnell

Hello! I would like to serve as Staff Senator because I am passionate about advocating for staff members and making the DU employment experience enriching and engaging for all.
have previous experience representing my colleagues at University College as Staff Advisory Council representative from 2019-2021, and I also served on the Executive Committee of SAC as Secretary during my tenure. In my SAC roles, I honed the skills of advocating for and reporting back to my unit in a transparent and consistent manner. During my time at DU, I have held positions both as a non-exempt (hourly) employee and an exempt, supervisory employee. I believe that these experiences help me understand the unique perspectives and challenges for each type of employee. Lastly, I value kind and respectful communication and collaboration - seeking to meet others where they are and working hard to establish trust and accountability. I would love the opportunity to bring these skills and talents to the inaugural Staff Senate at the University of Denver. Thank you for your consideration!

**Area 6**

**Kelsey Clark**

To be staff senator I would like to understand more about the inner workings of DU as well as improve the staff experience. After seeing some of the turnover reasons within my department I would like to see what can be improved in order to make DU an elite workplace. I have loved my time here and seen potential for what a great and healthy workplace would look like here. I will be happy to take any part in looking towards improvement. Some of my strengths are creativity, communication, organization, and efficiency. These strengths are why I thrive in my role and as a leader for my student employees.

**Chico Dimas**

As a proud indigenous (P’urhepecha) person, I am committed to promoting DEIB representation for Native American, First Nation, Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiian, and Indigenous staff at the University of Denver (DU). I aspire to serve on the Staff Senate to ensure our community feels a sense of belonging and support. I will create avenues for DU staff to engage with Native American history, fostering understanding and appreciation for our rich heritage. An example of that is, having Annual Professional Development Training on the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864, allowing us to confront the past and work towards a more inclusive future. Currently, I am the Co-Chair of the DEI Committee for the Rocky Mountain Association of Financial Aid Administrators (RMASFAA). In this role, I have initiated the creation of resources and DEI training for higher education necessary to translate ideas into tangible actions that promote DEI outcomes within university policies. In conclusion, I would be honored to represent my colleagues in Area 6 of DU. Having transparency and integrity as an Eagle Scout, I will uphold these values as a Senator.

**Maggie Heyduk**

I would like to serve as a Staff Senator to ensure staff voices are equitably heard by DU leadership in university governance. I want to serve as an active link for meaningful information exchange between staff and administration relative to issues of mutual concern. My priorities related to the staff experience at DU include ensuring equity in working
conditions and employment practices, including compensation, recognition and employee benefits. In addition, I aim to serve as a connector between students, staff and administration. As a student-facing staff, we see the areas of growth from many levels. As a social worker and a former educator, I am adept at viewing areas of growth from a systems-level view. When working with many stakeholders, it is important to be able to view issues of concerns with a critical eye while balancing the many complex perspectives fairly. I believe that I would be a strong candidate for Staff Senate as I am a strong leader, innovative, transparent and constantly seeking areas of improvement for myself as an individual, team, and program. In addition, I am continually evaluating practices through a lens of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity.

Jaz Howard

I have never served in a leadership position in the greater DU community. I think serving on this committee would provide a great opportunity to create cross campus connections and better understand the experiences and concerns of staff across campus. In addition, I think it would be great to be involved in decision making processes that affect staff. As a person of color I have a vested interest and a desire help improve work-place satisfaction among staff.

Megan Jarrad

I am interested in being a staff senator because I am passionate about removing barriers for connection between units. I believe that we are at our best when we pool resources and knowledge. I am excited about the potential for cross-campus collaboration available through the Staff Senate. I want to make sure that staff across campus are able to do their best work. The sharing of ideas and resources will allow for this. I plan to advocate for GSSW by sharing our successes and our failures as a unit. By listening to those around me, and by asserting the needs of staff at GSSW. Through my almost 9 years of working as a university staff member I have learned the importance of connection. My desire and drive to connect with those around me will be the cornerstone of my work as a Staff Senator.

Chase McNamee

I am deeply passionate about community. I believe that every person on our campus deserves to feel a deep sense of belonging and should be able to show up as they are and be welcomed. I want to be a senator to serve the DU community and staff members by bringing issues and concerns from them to the Senate and administration to be heard and acted on. I believe that a focus on a staff ‘4D Experience’ is critical. I want to advocate for staff so that each person can pursue their own experiences around intellectual growth, a career and life of purpose, well-being, and character development and exploration. We have a responsibility as an institution of higher education to ensure our staff each receive opportunities in these areas. I seek to be a collaborative person on campus who partners with people to amplify the amazing work of our community on campus, connect folks in different areas and spaces, and take action to tear down roadblocks to community and build new things to increase a sense of belonging for all on campus.
Stephanie Panion

As a proud DU alum and staff member, I am excited for the opportunity to apply for a position on DU's newly created Staff Senate. I was employed at DU before for several years, during which time I was an active member of the Staff Advisory Council (serving as president in 2007/2008). After some time away, I've returned to DU am excited by all the ways the campus has grown and changed, and I'm looking for ways to get more involved with the school and help continue its forward momentum. I plan to proactively engage with both GSSW staff representatives and representatives from the other departments in our area to learn more about their needs and concerns, and work with fellow senators to ensure that their voices are heard in decision-making processes across campus, and to ensure that I'm effectively communicating updates from the Senate back to the other departments in our area, to ensure that all staff are aware of important campus news and policies. I'm also committed to listening and learning from others in the organization in order to be as effective as possible in my role. Thank you for this opportunity to connect and serve!

Adela Smith

To be a part of improving what we do, our whole person, our community, and our institution. To collaborate with staff across the university and ensure our voice/our reality is heard by important stakeholders. Staff wellness (mental health/happiness/ balance/engagement/etc.) must be at the forefront. Examine the unnecessary obstacles our structures provide, advocate for flexibility, and view people as whole not a position that processes duties. It’s circular. Staff wellness will connect to any other priorities/concerns we have. The most important part of advocating is understanding what the problem is by asking ourselves deeper questions and using this information to create lasting change. Then effectively communicate, collaborate, and discuss with stakeholders. My love for higher ed and staff is a strength. My 15 years in higher ed at varied institutions provide me with perspective and keeps me from falling into the trap of the status quo. I recently graduated with an MA in higher ed. I studied our structures, challenges, and how to make change. My experience combined with that recent study of our profession/practice makes me a knowledgeable and supportive candidate.

Cassy Zapotocky

I would like to be a staff senator because I want to be a liaison for HRIC and the rest of employees. My priorities include improving benefits, equal pay, and hiring more diverse staff. I plan to address concerns with the HRIC leadership team and help improve policies and processes. I have been a senator for a while but I am also graduating with my Masters in Strategic Human Resources.

Area 7
Aleesha McDowell

As a devoted member of our community, I am eager to undertake the role of a staff senator to actively contribute to our institution's improvement. My tenure within the Sturm College of Law has deepened my appreciation for the diverse perspectives and experiences that define our community. Effective representation is vital for a thriving university, and as a staff senator, I aim to be a vocal advocate for my colleagues. I am dedicated to fostering an inclusive and collaborative environment, ensuring that the concerns and aspirations of the staff are not only heard but also actively integrated into decision-making processes. My experience leading Sturm's Faculty Support team has provided me with the tools to navigate the complexities of our institution and advocate for positive change. I am motivated by a desire to contribute to a campus culture that prioritizes transparency, equity, and shared governance. My inspiration to serve as a staff senator stems from a commitment to champion the interest of my colleagues, contribute to the advancement of our university community, and ensure that the staff's essential perspectives are integral to the growth and success of our institution.

Detric Robinson

Staff talent represents the largest group of employees at the University of Denver. Elevating their voices is crucial for creating and maintaining an environment of equity and trust. The Staff Senate, as part of DU's shared governance, provides an opportunity to ensure diverse perspectives are well-represented and considered as leadership shapes policy and takes action. We must be honest about our current state and aspirations, especially in highlighting DU's commitment to supporting diverse staff. Acknowledging the diversity of our staff talent, we must recognize that institutional decisions may have unbalanced impacts. It is crucial to articulate and challenge exclusionary and inequitable policies and practices that contribute to the experiences of staff talent. Finally, my advocacy will center on my strengths and a sincere belief that we can always be better than yesterday. I have committed to being curious about and advocating for changes in policy or practice to enhance the experiences of my colleagues. I have learned to eliminate the fear of positionality and reprimand, always favoring elevating concerns and ensuring I do my best to advocate for positive change.

Darlene Squires

I want to be a staff senator because while serving on the Staff Advisory Council for the past year plus, I have experienced what kind of change staff can bring. To see SAC move to Staff Senate is such a great accomplishment and I would love to be a voice for staff at DU. I feel my strengths are compassion, being a good listener and colleagues feel comfortable and safe to voice their concerns to me. I have served as co-chair of the CAHSS Staff Committee for the past two years and believe I can be an advocate for CAHSS staff. I think there are staff around campus and around CAHSS that do not know a lot of information about what is going on around campus, and I think I can help to spread the important information they need to know as a staff senator. I hope to see Staff Senate do great things around DU and would like to be a part of that because staff voices are equally important. I would like to thank everyone on the elections committee for your consideration and also thank you for your work and effort to get us here to Staff Senate. I have enjoyed my time on SAC and have learned a lot and hope to continue to serve.
Area 8

Sandra Castro

I been a staff member for the past 18+ years and not only do I have the experience but I also have the concern of where we stand and where we are going with DU. I have seen changes, good and bad but most of all I have been an advocate to the Department employee where I been at. To me everyone is equal no matter what position, title or seniority a person has, therefore everyone should be heard just like everyone else. what matters the most is that we are looking for the well being of DU staff. Not only bringing concerns/needs from the staff but to bring them together with administrators and working together hand in hand and with mutual respect.

Christine Hood

1. I want to be a staff senator to ensure that my colleagues voices are being heard across campus. I want to advocate for staff needs through cross campus connection. I believe that an active line of communication between leadership and staff is crucial and I would be honored to serve as a part of that. 2. My priorities are: more flexible work arrangements (DCB only has 1 day), pay equity study and action on said study, Cost of Living increase separately, mandatory supervisor training, re-vamping the performance review system, obtaining funding for additional staff events, better cross campus staff communication AND better communication within my unit between staff/faculty & leadership, more celebrations for things that are going well in my unit and across DU, additional professional development opportunities, and better structures for upward mobility & promotion. 3. I plan to bring things from our internal DCB staff advocacy board to the greater staff senate; specifically, to see if there are shared lived experiences that staff senate can champion across units at DU. I will encourage staff to reach out in other ways as well, i.e. surveys, emails, and face-to-face meetings.

John Maly

I began as a member of Staff Advisory Council in January 2023 and was excited to jump onto the Staff Senate Recommendations Task Force right away. This is a great opportunity for DU to amplify staff voice through more integration with the shared governance of our institution and I am looking forward to continuing this work as a Staff Senator for Area 8 (Registrar, Internationalization, Centers & Institutes, DCB, and NSM). One aspect that I look forward to is using my participation to represent folks of many different areas beyond the Office of the Registrar. In an institution such as DU, we face many natural silos in our work so this opportunity allows for more collaboration and communication with folks in other departments and areas. I’ve always considered myself resource-driven, so through advocacy on the Staff Senate, I want to determine how we can better connect folks to existing resources on-campus or develop new ones to bolster the staff experience within the DU community. Additionally, I want to embrace transparency as much as possible in this role because whether it is good news or not-so-good news, I want to keep folks informed about what's going on at DU.
Chad Saunders

I enjoy being in positions of leadership, and would like to bring my experience to the DU Staff Senate. I am particularly interested in the dehumanizing aspects of staff positions and would like to advocate and provide a voice for staff members. Often times we are treated as "just our position" (eg. Just the degree audit guy). As staff members, have experience that can inform, we have knowledge that can educate, and we have a voice that can empower. Discourse needs to be reintroduced into the equation. Conversations have become one sided, particularly around finance issues, and as staff we are often left out of many conversations that directly impact our positions. I served for two years as a VP of my office's regional professional organization and am currently serving as the President-Elect. I created a mentorship program to help others learn leadership skills. Leadership, knowledge and collegiality are what I will bring to the table as a Staff Senator.

Area 9

Christina Atwood

I'm excited for this opportunity to take my current passion of advocating for community safety, equity, and inclusion to a larger platform. Doing this work alone builds trust and respect with staff but creates distance and isolation from leadership. It would be empowering to stand beside others to put the idealistic phrase of OneDU into practice. My priority is and has always been a holistic approach to the community's safety. It's not enough to solely focus on the criminal aspect of safety. Staff need to feel psychologically safe in the workplace and feel they have the freedom to voice concerns without the fear of negative repercussions. I don't want to hear from my department head that staff in uniform are not allowed into conversations with university leadership. I have and will continue to create a safe space for staff to voice their concerns and feel they are being heard. I will bring their concerns to the Staff Senate where together we can address transparency, inequity, and create a better workplace. I bring the trust and respect of my peers along with strong values and core competencies. I would be honored to represent Campus Safety staff.

Mark Derham

I am excited for the Staff Senate since I believe one of the most powerful tools in improving the morale and satisfaction of staff at DU is for all of us to know our concerns are being heard and addressed by leadership. My priority as a Staff Senator would be to advocate for a more supportive environment for all staff. I am interested in addressing workplace well-being and being a conduit for open communication across DU. If elected, I would actively engage with the staff in my area, so their unique voices are heard and represented within the Staff Senate. My strengths lie in my ability to listen, collaborate, and find common ground. I would take a practical approach to resolving the concerns of staff within my area. In the words of Pedro Sanchez, vote for me and I'll make your wildest dreams come true.
Virginia Pitts

I would be excited to be a Staff Senator because I care deeply about well-being, connection, and inclusion. This year I led an OTL team in interviewing staff and faculty to learn more about how we can support faculty success/well-being while also promoting well-being among our OTL staff. A striking insight was the extent to which existing structures/policies can exacerbate inequities when it comes to accessing well-being. When we’re unable to access well-being, we’re less able to contribute in meaningful ways … which results in a huge loss of potential for us to do great things together. In my 10 years here I’ve developed a genuine love for DU. That love is about the people; every time I walk across campus I see someone who makes my heart sing. Yet not all who work/learn here feel this sense of belonging. Even as someone with a set of privileged identities, I at times have felt my experiences/perspectives aren't valued/understood; this sense of exclusion/undervaluing is amplified 10-fold for many members of our community. I'd love to help create ways in which we can hear/engage/learn from all community members in envisioning together new possibilities for what we might become.

Allison Weihrauch

I would like to serve on the DU Staff Senate to support the values of building an inclusive, equitable, and transparent university culture. I want to make a positive impact on the staff work environment by advocating for staff voices, well-being, and recognition. I am also excited for the opportunity to build and strengthen networks of support across campus. With over 15 years of professional experience in higher education and 3 years working at DU as the Associate Director for the Office of Academic Advising, I have extensive experience effectively communicating and collaborating with faculty, staff, and students. I would also bring the strengths of responsibility, consistency, and consensus-building to the staff senator role. Thank you for your consideration.

Shelby Wones

I want to be a staff senator because I want to find a positive and productive space to involve staff in the university’s greater conversations and decision making. It is important to me to form greater connections with the rest of the university. My priorities/concerns related to the staff experience at DU are staff compensation and equitable division of labor, staff well-being, pay transparency for the library and the entire university. To advocate for staff, I plan to present a comprehensive report on staff wages compared to the cost of living and wages at other academic libraries, and present staff surveys. With questions like, "Do you work multiple jobs to make ends meet, how often do you worry about paying your bills on time, what percentage of your paycheck goes toward rent, did you ever have to take out loans to supplement your income, how much student loan debt have you accrued that you must pay, and staff must pay to park on campus. How much do you pay monthly to park? The strengths I will bring are passion, active listening skills, community building, and a knack for researching attainable goals. I would love to represent the library’s staff and important work.
Area 10

Abigail Girard

I want to be a staff senator as I view this as an opportunity to create a meaningful, positive impact on my professional community. As an institution, I see the strength and desire to build and change together, and I want to help facilitate those conversations and changes. In my time at DU, I've seen firsthand the high turnover rate's impact on the staff, which impacts our ability to succeed in our University-wide initiatives, keep morale high, and cultivate an inclusive culture. I am excited about the opportunity to join a senate working towards a better DU for their staff. My main concerns headed into the staff senate are policy surrounding bereavement, PTO, accessibility, and culture-building. I excel at creatively approaching challenges with an intersectional, social justice approach to ensure trainings, processes, and procedures are accessible and engaging to all. In my previous roles, I have played an integral role in driving diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and innovative process improvements that create space for dialogue and change.

Gergana Kostadvinova Law

I am interested in being a staff senator because as a proud, two-time alumna and employee of DU, I'm dedicated to making this university the best employer possible for all of our staff. One of my main concerns as an employee is the rate of staff turnover across the campus. I think DU can be a great place to work and grow, but this high rate of staff turnover indicates that there are issues that need to be addressed to maintain our top talent at all levels. I don't have all the answers, but I'm curious to work with others to brainstorm solutions based on feedback and ideas from our colleagues. I'd love to host listening sessions with other staff from my area to hear their concerns and bring them to the Staff Senate to make sure that I am effectively advocating for their needs. I think anonymous surveys can also be helpful tools to gather this kind of information, but they can leave out a lot of details and nuance. Based on my professional and volunteer experiences, I bring various strengths to this position, including community and relationship building, program management, and logistics management. I also have strong verbal, written, and cross-cultural communication skills.

Jon Stone

I have been with DU since 2016 and have worked as the News Director, where I launched the DU Newsroom, and Director of Media Relations. I've had the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from across DU. I work with faculty, staff and students to elevate their work through coverage in the Newsroom and the media. Additionally, I helped create and lead DU's Public Impact Fellow program. Each year, a cohort of faculty and staff go through training that helps them understand how to disseminate their work to a broader audience. I'm interested in staff senate because my experience at DU has put me in a position to help others. I have experienced the impact of staff turnover and dissatisfaction. I believe staff senate can help be an advocate for individuals who feel like their voice is not being heard in their unit. With the
new staff senate structure, I'm in an area where I already have close relationships with many individuals. Knowing some of the staff and leadership will help me be the best advocate I can be. My job is to listen to others and work on a communication process to share their message. I believe this skill and my experience with DU can be an asset to staff senate.