



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
THE EMPLOYEE FORUM • Campus Box 3488 • Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3488

February 8, 2005

Senator John Edwards
c/o Kathleen McGlynn
One America Committee
1001 G Street NW
Suite 400W
Washington DC 20001

Dear Senator Edwards:

On behalf of the Employee Forum, congratulations on your recent appointment as director of The Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity here at UNC. It is always good when a Tar Heel returns home, but when one returns after traveling to the very pinnacle of public life, it is particularly exciting.

The Employee Forum of UNC-Chapel Hill began in 1992 as an advisory body to the Chancellor and generally to the Administration. Our charge is to address constructively the concerns of non-faculty University Employees. Employees here have faced difficulties with rising health care costs, lagging salary increases and continuing staff turnover, among other problems. As most compensation questions depend on decisions made by the State Legislature, campus frustration with the pace of progress can flare from year to year.

Forum Delegates are volunteer line staff elected to represent the 7,000+ Employees who provide the "glue" for the many activities of our students and faculty. Delegates are elected proportionally according to employment category, meaning a proportional number of secretaries, grounds workers and administrators serve.

Chancellor Moeser has been actively involved in our efforts since his appointment in 2000. He has worked closely with the Forum to address workplace quality issues, namely through his Task Force for a Better Workplace, which I had the fortune to co-chair with him (<http://hr.unc.edu/specialprograms/betterworkplace>). The Task Force represents a substantial theoretical and financial commitment by the University to address internal workplace concerns.

Forum Delegates meet monthly with Provost Shelton and his chief lieutenants to raise, track and solve operational problems. The Forum hosts biannual community

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meetings at which line Employees can raise concerns with high-level officials. Forum committees work to improve career development opportunities, staff recognition, community involvement and manager-staff relations, among other concerns.

Most recently, the Forum, coordinating with University administration and other staff groups, convinced the State Legislature to provide a flat \$1000 salary increase for lower paid State employees.

I hope you will see benefits in building a working relationship between the Forum and the Center. Everyday we wrestle with the questions that you have raised so movingly in your public statements—questions of poverty, work and opportunity. You can find out more about the Forum on our website: <http://forum.unc.edu>

Again, please accept our heartfelt congratulations on being named director of the Center. I, my fellow officers and our elected colleagues on the Forum bid you a kind welcome. **I would also like to invite you to address a Forum meeting at your convenience; our next Forum meeting is Wednesday, March 2, at 9:30 a.m. in the Wilson Library Pleasants Assembly Room.** We would love to have you speak then or at any other time. Should I be able to assist you in any way prior to your arrival, please do not hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely,



Tommy Griffin, Chair

cc: Chancellor James Moeser
Provost Robert Shelton
Dean Gene Nichol
Vice Chancellor Nancy Suttentfield
Associate Vice Chancellor Laurie Charest
Ms. Brenda Kirby
The Employee Forum

TG/mb