



# 2026-2028 Staff Council

Candidates & Statements

## **Advancement Office**

Daagye Hendricks Harvill  
Gina Henley  
[Letessia Monique Penick](#)

## **Athletics Department**

Jasmine Jones  
[Justin Messiah Cooper](#)  
[Kelsey Marie Sphar](#)

## **Collat School of Business**

Andreia Bianca Stechmann  
Kristen Craig

## **College of Arts and Sciences**

[Allyson Kaley Mills](#)  
[Amy Raynor](#)  
[Kala Bhattar](#)  
Kassie Doggett

## **Facilities Division**

[Alison Nichols](#)  
David Austin Dunion  
[Jonathan Scott Glenn](#)  
Michael Sims  
Tarika Devona Florence  
Trish Fox

## **Graduate School**

Ashley Foster  
[Jenny Ng Douglas](#)  
[Kent Andersen](#)  
Nathan Anthony Anderson  
Richard Danner

## **Heersink School of Medicine**

Brittini Nichole Shields  
Clifford Kennon  
Edith Dawn Williams  
[Fatima Igdoura](#)  
[Hadley Robertson](#)  
[Jarvis Jones](#)  
[Jeremy Bagley](#)  
[Tanisha Davison](#)

## **Honors College**

Maegan Royal  
[Sarah Smith](#)  
Yolanda DeBardelaben

## **Office of the Provost**

Bianca Coleman  
Nathan Rouse  
[Rachel Bailes](#)  
Savannah Grace Jones  
Wilton Murphy

## **Office of Access and Engagement**

Bria Morgan  
Ivory Leonard Sirmans

## **Office of VP Administration**

[Matthew Benjamin Joiner](#)  
Pamela Snell-Pope  
Tim Green  
Tracy William Thompson

## **Office of VP Finance**

[Anetra Michelle Coleman](#)  
[Deana Heath](#)  
Kimberlyn Allen  
Kreg Worthington  
[Sade Howard](#)

## Office of VP Information Technology

[Cherelle Pritchett](#)

Joseph Boehm

[Kayla McCoy-Reeves](#)

Macy Jane Moon

[Reginald Battle](#)

## Office of VP Research

[Fleurette Pruitt](#)

## Office of VP Student Affairs

Abby Huguley

Debbie Morgette

Demetrius Pearson

[Eboney Whitson](#)

## School of Dentistry

[Avis Williams](#)

Charlene Paige

[Christopher Washington](#)

Emily Turner

Kathleen Diveley

[Rosie Turner](#)

Teresa Mann

## School of Education and Human Sciences

Amber Jones

Charles Morris

Mary Norwood

Sha'niethia Johnson Wright

## School of Engineering

Sydney Sherwood

[William Judson Dunlap](#)

## School of Health Professions

[Alexandra Stephens](#)

[April Tench Madison](#)

[Jazmyn Wright](#)

Jenna Knauf

## School of Nursing

Alexander Wiggins

Bryan Curtis

[Caroline Parkman Barr](#)

Connie Jackson-Gaiter

[Khalid Freij](#)

[Kristen Dykes](#)

Pareasa Rahimi

## School of Optometry

Jakobe Micajah Perry

Jenifer Montejo

[Kathryn Moore Trammell](#)

Mintie Keiser

[Nikeshia Blue](#)

Tamarreo Tatum

## School of Public Health

[Elena Kidd](#)

[Elliott Wyckoff Myers](#)

[Ginny Harvard](#)

[Jasmine Searcy](#)

Malerie Duff

[Shemeka Gillespie](#)

## UAB Libraries

Alliemarie Humphries

Howard Fox

[Jess Wylie](#)

[Sharron Brownlee](#)

[Suzanne Massey Brazell](#)

## Marketing & Communications

Kasey Danielle Hage

[Malcolm Lunceford](#)



## Jazmyn Wright

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like Staff Council to prioritize transparency and consistency in decision-making that directly impacts staff. Policies and processes are changed and communicated after the fact or applied inconsistently across units. Establishing clearer communication channels and ensuring equitable implementation would build trust and improve overall staff morale.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I plan to actively engage school representatives by creating structured opportunities for input before decisions are made. I also believe in closing the loop, ensuring representatives can see how their input influenced outcomes. Making the process more meaningful and not just performative.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will communicate through a combination of email updates, quick touchpoints during existing meetings, and being available for direct feedback. My goal is to keep communication clear, timely, and actionable.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and the ability to navigate complex processes while keeping things moving forward. I'm also a direct communicator who values clarity and accountability. I'm comfortable asking questions, advocating for consistency, and following through to ensure things don't fall through the cracks.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would improve visibility into what the Staff Council is actively working on and the impact of those efforts. Currently, staff are unaware of ongoing initiatives or how decisions are made. Increasing transparency would strengthen engagement and reinforce the value of the Council's work.



## Kayla McCoy-Reeves

**What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Breaking down silos on campus. We all tend to sit in our own little hubs, and it can be hard to collaborate across campus when the walls are only building up.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Open and honest communication. The council serves to help staff, and value the insights and opinions of our campus constituents.

**How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Doing what I do best, sharing information and bringing our people to the events.

**What strengths do you bring?**

Strategic and critical thinking, along with an ability to plan an event to others will enjoy

**If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would enjoy having later meeting times.



## Suzanne Massey Brazell

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

would like to see the Staff Council continue to provide a strong voice for staff. The Staff Council has always facilitated constructive discussions regarding the staff roles in enhancing UAB's overall vision and mission. Clear, transparent communication is key in making sure that staff feel that they are an important part of guiding the direction we take as a university.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** We must make sure that everyone has a seat at the table when we make decisions that impact students, staff, and faculty. I hope to use my years of networking to strengthen those existing departmental connections. By doing so, school representatives will hopefully be comfortable with me as someone they can trust with their concerns.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will provide detailed notes from Staff Council meetings while promoting university events and resources. I will do my best to be an ally to staff, taking their concerns to the council. By providing needed feedback, hopefully, we can make those members feel heard and their concerns alleviated or at least lessened.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

My strengths include my over 25 years of experience as a staff member. That includes decades of institutional knowledge. I have excellent organizational skills, am a detailed oriented, and dependable. I would like to think that my years on this campus have molded me into a better co-worker and individual.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing about the Staff Council, it would be to provide it with more power when it comes to university administration vs. staff negotiations.

## Avis Williams



### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would like Staff Council to continue focusing on is improving communication and transparency between staff and leadership. In my experience, having clear and consistent communication helps employees feel more informed, supported, and engaged in their roles. I believe strengthening this connection will not only improve workplace morale but also help staff feel that their voices are heard and valued across the university.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I plan to involve school representatives by creating open and consistent lines of communication. This includes actively seeking input, encouraging feedback, and ensuring that concerns and ideas from different areas are brought forward and considered. I believe decision-making should be collaborative, and it's important that representatives feel included and empowered to share perspectives that reflect their teams.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will communicate with staff by being accessible, approachable, and consistent. I plan to share updates in a clear and timely manner while also creating opportunities for open dialogue. Whether through informal conversations, email communication, or gathering feedback, my goal is to ensure staff feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and that important information is communicated effectively.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring strong communication, organization, and problem-solving skills, along with the ability to work collaboratively across different teams. In my current role, I regularly serve as a point of contact for employees and leadership, which has strengthened my ability to listen, respond thoughtfully, and support others effectively. I am also proactive and solution-oriented, always looking for ways to improve processes and create a more efficient and supportive work environment.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

One area I would focus on is increasing visibility and awareness of Staff Council initiatives and resources. Ensuring that staff are consistently informed about the work being done on their behalf can strengthen engagement and trust. By improving communication and outreach, more employees can feel connected to the Council and understand how their voices are represented.



## Kristen Dykes

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would like Staff Council to focus on is expanding opportunities for staff career development and advancement. Many staff are deeply committed to the university but may feel limited in their growth pathways. I would advocate for increased access to professional development, mentorship programs, and clearer internal career ladders. Supporting staff growth not only benefits individuals but also helps the university retain talent and build a stronger, more skilled workforce from within.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council? I**

plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process by creating consistent, two-way communication channels that ensure their voices are both heard and reflected in outcomes. This includes regularly seeking input through structured touchpoints such as brief surveys, listening sessions, and direct outreach before key decisions are made. Equally important, I would prioritize closing the loop—sharing back how their feedback influenced decisions so representatives know their perspectives are valued and impactful. I also believe in fostering an environment where representatives feel comfortable bringing forward both concerns and ideas, not just responding to requests for input. By being intentional about engagement, transparency, and follow-through, I would work to ensure that decision-making within Staff Council reflects the diverse experiences and needs across all schools, rather than a single perspective.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I plan to communicate with staff within my unit through a consistent and approachable mix of both formal and informal channels. This includes sharing regular updates following Staff Council meetings—whether through brief email summaries, team meetings, or existing communication platforms—to keep staff informed of key discussions and decisions. Equally important, I want communication to be two-way. I will make myself accessible for feedback by encouraging staff to share questions, concerns, and ideas, whether through direct conversations, quick check-ins, or anonymous options when appropriate. I also believe in closing the loop—ensuring that staff not only have a voice, but also see how their input is represented and impacts outcomes. By being transparent, responsive, and present, I aim to build trust and ensure staff feel both informed and genuinely heard.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a combination of strong communication, approachability, and a solutions-focused mindset. I am someone who listens carefully and values different perspectives, which allows me to represent others thoughtfully and ensure their voices are reflected in discussions. I am also highly collaborative and work well across teams, especially in situations where priorities are competing or challenges are complex. Rather than focusing on problems alone, I naturally look for practical, forward-moving solutions that support both staff needs and organizational goals. Additionally, I am dependable and follow through on commitments. If I take on a responsibility or bring forward a concern, I make it a priority to see it through and communicate updates along the way. I believe these strengths will allow me to contribute meaningfully and be a reliable, effective representative on Staff Council.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing about the Staff Council, it would be to strengthen visibility and connection between the Council and the broader staff community. While important work is being done, not all staff fully understand the Council's role, how decisions are made, or how they can engage. I would like to see a more intentional focus on communication and outreach—ensuring that updates are clear, accessible, and consistently shared, and that there are more opportunities for staff to provide input. Increasing this visibility not only builds trust, but also encourages greater participation and ensures the Council is truly representative of the staff it serves. By strengthening that connection, the Council can be even more effective in advocating for staff needs and driving meaningful impact across the university.

## April Tench Madison



### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would really like to see Staff Council focus on overall staff well-being—because at the end of the day, happy staff = a stronger UAB. That includes things like work-life balance, feeling supported in your role, having access to resources, and just knowing that you're valued. When people feel good, they do good work—it's that simple. I think we have a great opportunity to continue building a culture where people feel energized, supported, and connected—not just as employees, but as people. Because when our staff are thriving, UAB thrives.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I'm a big believer that the best decisions come from hearing different perspectives, so I want representatives to feel like they truly have a seat at the table. For me, that means keeping communication open, asking for input, and actually using that feedback when making decisions. I naturally think in terms of "we" instead of "I," and I want that same team mindset within Staff Council. When people feel heard and included, they show up differently—and that's when you get the best ideas.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I like to keep communication consistent, but also very approachable. Yes, I'll share updates and make sure people know what's going on—but I also believe some of the best communication happens in everyday moments. I tend to check in with people, have quick conversations, and just stay connected. I want people to feel comfortable coming to me at any time—whether it's feedback, ideas, or just needing someone to listen. When people feel heard, everything works better.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I think one of my biggest strengths is that I genuinely connect with people. I don't meet a stranger, and I truly enjoy building relationships and supporting others. I also bring a strong sense of accountability—if I say I'm going to do something, it's getting done. And I bring a lot of energy and enthusiasm, which helps keep things moving forward, even when things get challenging. I'm also very collaborative and used to working across different areas, so I'm comfortable bringing people together and finding solutions that work for everyone.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing, it would be making Staff Council a little more visible and connected to staff across campus. There's a lot of really good work happening, and I think more people would want to be involved if they knew about it. I'd love to help bridge that gap—so staff feel more informed, more included, and more comfortable engaging with Staff Council. At the end of the day, the more connected we are, the stronger we are as a university.

## Jenny Ng Douglas



### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would advocate for is strengthening the role of Staff Council in strategic initiatives while improving communication across all staff levels. Staff Council are meant to serve as a bridge between staff and administration, ensuring clear, two-way communication and meaningful staff representation. As an international student turned university employee, I've seen how communication gaps can lead to missed opportunities and disengagement. I would focus on building a more connected communication approach that highlights staff accomplishments and ensures every voice is heard across units and backgrounds.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

As someone who has worked across cultures and roles, I understand the importance of making participation accessible and intentional. My goal is to ensure representatives are not just present, but actively shaping decisions. My plan is to make the process more structured, inclusive, and collaborative. I would establish regular feedback loops across different roles and levels, create shared digital spaces where representatives can contribute ideas before meetings, and encourage storytelling from different units to ensure decisions reflect real staff experiences.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

In my current role as Director of Communications for the Graduate School, I oversee overall communication strategies and the distribution of key messages from the university and senior leadership. I translate complex information into accessible content when communicating with staff within the school. Consistent and clear communication is central to my approach. Staff councils are expected to both gather feedback and keep staff informed, and I plan to do that through a mix of email and regular in-person meetings.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a combination of global perspective, institutional experience, and strategic communications and marketing expertise. With over 10 years of experience on campus, I understand how important it is to feel included, informed, and represented. This perspective allows me to advocate for diverse staff experiences and ensure communication reaches everyone effectively. Professionally, my background in communications and marketing enables me to help elevate the visibility of staff achievements and initiatives, improve how information is shared across the university, and strengthen the digital presence of Staff Council.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing, it would be to enhance the visibility and impact of Staff Council's work. I believe Staff Council plays a critical role in advocating for staff and fostering a sense of belonging and community, but its efforts are not always widely seen or fully understood. This can limit engagement and reduce the perceived value of the Council. By making the work of Staff Council more visible, we can increase engagement and ensure staff feel connected to the decisions that affect them. Therefore, I believe there are opportunities to better showcase the real impact of staff contributions, event outcomes, and successes, while also strengthening the Staff Council's reputation.



## Kent Andersen

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

The Staff Council can continue to foster effective communication among staff, administration, faculty, and students to support UAB's vision, mission, values, and goals.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process by gathering relevant information, perspectives, and concerns related to proposed changes or key decisions.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will communicate with staff in our unit through monthly meetings and, as needed, through one-one and small group conversations.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I have administrative experience, a track record of collaboration, and am curious about different perspectives and ideas.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I don't yet have enough experience with Staff Council to know what might be changed or why.



## Rosie Turner

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Increase staff development opportunities and strengthen collaboration across campus. Investing in staff development enhances job satisfaction, retention, and institutional effectiveness.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I will reach out to school representatives early in the process to collect their perspectives, questions, and concerns. This ensures their voices shape discussions rather than reacting after decisions are nearly final.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will share concise summaries highlighting key discussions, decisions, and upcoming initiatives. These updates will be delivered through email, communication team or during scheduled unit meetings so staff know exactly what is happening at the Staff Council level.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am deeply committed to helping staff grow, feel valued, and advance in their careers. I believe professional development is essential to retention, morale, and the overall success of the university. This passion drives me to advocate for training, mentorship, leadership pathways, and equitable access to learning opportunities for all staff. Because of my long tenure and broad network, I understand the needs of staff in different roles and environments. I can listen carefully, gather input, and ensure that a wide range of experiences are reflected in Council decisions. Staff can count on me to represent them accurately, share information clearly, and advocate consistently.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would expand the ways staff can share their perspectives—through surveys, listening sessions, or school-based feedback groups (i.e., unit staff councils). This ensures the Council's decisions reflect the needs of staff in all roles and units.



## Sade Howard

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like staff council to implement more cross shadowing programs and internal internships to allow employees at UAB to be more aware of their career mobility access. This will give the employees here more transparency on where they could see themselves growing in other aspects of their career mobility. Overall helping within the retention of keeping employees here at the university.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I would reach out to the individual school representatives and schedule a 15 minute team call or if they don't have the time to speak I would send out email of the topics that were discussed in the meeting. To let them be aware of what is going on. Also, I would create a survey where they can input their thoughts on the conversation.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I would communicate with the staff in my unit through a combination of visibility, consistency and trust building. I would establish touch points through creating a shared document with my department to showcase topics that were discussed in the staff council meetings. In these newsletters I am going to create team polls and open written responses so that they can openly voice their opinions on the subject. Gather perspectives and if I have a chance I will fill the staff council in on my department concerns.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am highly organized, a strong team player, and very ambitious. I believe these qualities enable me to bring meaningful value to Staff Council, as I value discipline, rules, and structure. My attributes will also help support and advance the University's vision, mission, values, and goals.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Staff Council should encourage members to invite individuals who are not currently part of the organization to attend meetings. This would help them become more familiar with the topics discussed and the meeting structure, while also providing opportunities for networking and building connections that may encourage future involvement.



## Matthew Benjamin Joiner

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

As someone relatively newer to UAB, I don't have a predetermined agenda. What I can say is that work-life balance and employee wellbeing are causes I care deeply about, and I'd want those to be a lense through which the Staff Council evaluates priorities. My first goal will be to listen and to understand what staff across this large and diverse institution are actually experiencing and let that shape where I focus my energy.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Serving as a representative means making sure the people I represent actually feel represented. I'd want staff in my unit to know who I am, how to reach me, and that their concerns have a real path to the Staff Council's table. That means staying accessible, being transparent about what the Staff Council is working on, and bringing genuine feedback into discussions rather than speaking on behalf of people without really knowing what they think.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I want to meet people where they are. That means maintaining an open email and Teams policy so I can be reached easily, but also making myself physically available and literally meeting them where they are - whether that's visiting someone's office or catching up over coffee.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a "listen-first" approach. I believe good representation starts with genuinely understanding people's concerns before jumping to solutions. I also bring empathy and a sincere drive to see UAB continue to improve for everyone who works here, whether they're in a highly visible role or one that rarely gets recognized. Being newer to UAB also gives me a fresh prospective; I haven't been here long enough to accept 'that's just how it is' as an answer.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

The Staff Council's visibility needs to be boosted across campus. I suspect that there is a large, important group of staff that don't know the council exists or that its a real channel for their voice. Better awareness means better engagement, and better engagement makes the council more effective.



## Alexandra Stephens

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would recommend that they consider developing a formal mentorship program. A structured mentorship initiative could help support professional growth, knowledge transfer, and long-term engagement, particularly for newer staff or those entering a new field.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I plan to involve School of Health Professions representatives by regularly gathering feedback from SHP staff, representing their perspectives in council discussions, and communicating council decisions back to the school.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I would like a communication forum from the SHP staff council to be implemented, similar to the e-reporter. Information that was shared from SHP staff council to the school would be more consistent and fully transparent.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a strong sense of dedication and a hard-working mindset to everything I do. I enjoy contributing thoughtful and fun ideas that help build engagement and improve processes, and I am always willing to step in and support the work that needs to be done. I am also eager to continue growing my leadership skills and welcome opportunities to learn, collaborate, and take on new responsibilities.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would encourage more opportunities for community involvement through increased engagement and visibility of the Staff Council. In particular, I would like to see more events sponsored by the council that help bring staff together in meaningful and fun ways, such as a designated “Staff Day” at a baseball or softball game. Events like these can strengthen connections, boost morale, and foster a greater sense of community across campus.



## Caroline Parkman Barr

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Increase staff professional development and recognition opportunities. I know the university has projects and initiatives in these areas underway, but these are vital aspects of staff career growth, retention, and well-being that I hope to champion as part of UAB Staff Council.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Transparency and shared knowledge are EVERYTHING when forming a basis for decision making! Staff roles with the same or similar titles vary wildly in day-to-day duties dependent on the school, department, and team you work with - it's important to understand the work staff is doing across the university in order to provide services and pursue initiatives that best serve those using them. It's also important to factor in different levels and years of experience different staff members have.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

The School of Nursing (SON) has two solid, staff-wide communication channels set in place, in addition to traditional avenues like email and calendar invites. Face-to-face communication at our monthly SON Staff Council meeting (in-person/Zoom) and the SON's monthly e-newsletter "Vital Signs" provide a consistent platform for sharing announcements, promoting events, and gathering feedback.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

In my work, I'm efficient, detail-oriented, and always looking for creative quality improvement opportunities. I value the WHY behind everything and believe transparency, empathy, and adaptability are key to staff (and school!) success, no matter the role. Combined, these traits make me a strong communicator who isn't afraid to advocate for what just makes sense and follow through on change outcomes, when needed.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I'd love to see stronger communication about on-going initiatives and projects outside of a meeting - things take time to come to fruition, but knowing what's coming down the pipeline, or what conversations are being had and their outcomes, would decrease redundant work on the individual school level, increase a sense of connection between staff in different schools and departments, and dissipate feelings of not being heard or understood. You don't know what you don't know - so let's communicate more!



## Cherelle Pritchett

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I think panels are a great idea for individual departments. Staff council members are advocating for their specific department, and it would be encouraging for those members to hear interest of other staff and faculty members to ensure involvement of everyone throughout UAB.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** When ideas are brought to the forefront, I believe it's best to collaborate with everyone on how we can achieve any goal or mission of UAB Staff Council. Involving school representatives helps ensure that we're considering every angle when making decisions and reaching our full potential in everything that we offer.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I want to be as honest and open as possible with the staff within my unit, which is why I suggested panels as an idea to ensure staff that their feedback and ideas are heard and ensuring them all appropriate responses will be brought forward to UAB Staff Council. Teams and emails are a great resource to reach staff and keep them updated on any and all events and/or ideas suggested by Staff council.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I would say one of my greatest strengths would have to be adaptability. I adapt well to change and don't mind taking on any role that needs to be filled to help with the success of whatever I'm doing. I'm a team player who works well with others, but doesn't mind leading if need be. Collaboration is important to me, as I won't have every idea, and love to hear others thoughts and opinions. In my current role, I handle a lot of financial responsibility that has helped strengthen my organization and attention to details.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I don't believe there's anything I'd change about Staff Council. I love the mission of this group and what you all offer to other UAB staff. I would suggest broadcasting more of UAB Staff Council, as I only heard about it through my department specifically. People all over UAB need to know more about Staff council, how they can get involved, or to simply be heard for future involvement and/or changes suggested.



## **Kala Bhattar**

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like Staff Council to revisit employee pays to better reflect the current economic changes taking place. I believe that is one thing that impacts everyone across campus, and one way that UAB can show that we care about our employees and their wellbeing.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I would start by inviting them to engage in open conversation with the Staff Council. As a representative of the Staff Council, I would help in facilitating conversations between students, staff, faculty, and school representatives.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

By word of mouth, as well as intentional & targeted outreach.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am a great multitasker, great with people, reliable, task-oriented, and a first-generation UAB alumna who is also a Master's student and an employee, making me uniquely qualified to advocate for staff, while ensuring that our goals are aligned with our main mission, education.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing about the Staff Council, I would say that we should advertise it more because as it stands, many people are unaware of its existence and what it accomplishes.



## **Nikesha Blue**

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like for Staff Council to focus on strengthening an inclusive, respectful workplace where staff feel valued, heard, and supported regardless of role or background.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I would build a strong relationship with school representatives, listen to concerns.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I would communicate with staff via email and word of mouth within my department to keep everyone informed.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am willing to help wherever needed.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

One thing I would change is to improve Staff Council outreach so a wider range of voices are heard and represented.

## Elliott Wyckoff Myers



### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I thought the UAB staff onboarding was a bit lackluster when I joined in 2022. I'd like to see the University offer an in-person onboarding/orientation for staff to expose them to more of the institution and make professional connections. As well as strengthen the lessons around benefits & retirement accounts offered - I've met too many people who confuse the TRS pension with their 403(b) and forego the 5% UAB match.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I sit on the building committee, which is a good group to get a pulse on the school through. Any UAB staff council meetings I would send out updates/feedback on and welcome any discussions by members of the SOPH to hear their thoughts.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I communicate with a lot of channels - mainly Outlook, Teams, hallway chats. Important messaging always goes out via email and I'm always happy to meet face to face with any member of the school.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I've worked in other schools besides the SOPH at UAB and maintain professional connections in other areas, so I think I have a good picture of the overall campus environment.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

The membership of staff council to include me on it! Without knowing too well how staff council operates I'm not sure I'm qualified to suggest any changes currently, but would learn and listen intently if selected so I could hopefully improve the Council.



## Hadley Robertson

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Sustainable workload and burnout prevention. Not only as a wellness initiative, but as an operational priority for every work group. When staff feel supported by realistic expectations for balance, performance, retention, and morale all improve.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

By asking for and providing consistent feedback from administrations and staff at all levels in my area. I will give clear touchpoints for input, shared visibility into decisions, and closing the loop with anyone who is inquiring about or involved in a decision.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Regular, concise updates and open dialogue for input. I want communication to be clear, accessible, and responsive, so staff feel informed and heard, not overwhelmed.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

Strategic thinking, direct advocacy, and clear communication. I focus on identifying root issues, speaking up when it matters, and translating feedback into actionable outcomes.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Stronger visibility into overall impact. Staff should clearly see how their input leads to decisions and change, because transparency builds trust and drives engagement.



## Kelsey Marie Sphar

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I think one thing that should be a priority across the university is interdepartmental support at everyone's events. We're all trying to make the student and staff experience at UAB the best possible, so coming together and supporting our units across the board will be a great step. Everyone is busy, but dividing and conquering in cross campus support would be key in aiding this.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I think open discussion is key and vital in making decisions that touch more than my direct reports. I think sometimes the university side doesn't think of athletics and vice versa. I would like to be the voice for athletics and be able to share the university side with our athletic department more.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

We have weekly external department staff meetings and I would highlight high level items in that meeting. Also, our athletics marketing staff holds a weekly meeting where I can bring them in on a more detailed level to see how we can support or contribute to the items in Staff Council.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I have experience in leading cross-functional coordination (ticketing, sponsorships, communications) meaning I can handle the complexity of universities, not just execute tasks. I like to be transparent in projects and have open lines of communication!

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

More transparency about the Staff Council to groups not immediately involved. I hear a lot about what's happening based off another co-worker who is involved already. But without that I don't think as a general staff member I would know. I would love to build bridges across campus to have a free flowing freeway of information and staff benefits.



## Malcolm Lunceford

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like for them to make unity across campus a priority. We are all Blazers, and we all support each other.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I do not work in a school, but in my unit, I will share all items for discussion with my central unit so that they are aware of all that is happening with Staff Council.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will share all Staff Council news at our monthly team meeting and in our Slack channel. I will also share all email communications with them as well.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am a team player, and I am excellent at building relationships and bringing people together.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would like for its reputation on campus to grow. There are so many great things that Staff Council does, and all staff across campus should be involved.



## William Judson Dunlap

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Prioritizing continuous improvement of university processes that impact staff, especially those that are inefficient or ineffective, to clearer, more consistent, and function as intended.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** By facilitating open communication channels to ensure awareness of decisions made by Staff Council and to provide opportunities for suggestions and ideas from school representatives to be shared with Staff Council.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Important updates will be communicated via email, with additional discussion and new topic input available during School of Engineering quarterly all-staff meetings.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

Patience and persistence in seeing commitments through, paired with a willingness to advocate for the needs of staff within my unit and the university as a whole.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Expanding incentives for those who serve and participate within Staff Council to help promote deeper engagement and greater institutional impact.



## Christopher Washington

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I will always champion inclusion to be a priority for the whole of UAB as a University, medical system, and as a organization as a whole. I think a fair chance is one of the best opportunities that can be given to any of us as employees or students.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Transparency and being open is the best practice when involving others. Having more brainpower to solve a problem or make a decision often makes it much easier to come to a conclusion.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I plan to be openly communicative in an effort to make sure there are no gaps or miscommunications.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I still think of myself new to UAB only being in my position for 3 years so I can still think like a new staff member but along with my energy and positive attitude I plan to be as helpful as possible in my position

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I have only heard about the Staff Council from the representatives from my own institution so, I would like more opportunities to show ourselves to people that the Council represents.



## Justin Messiah Cooper

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Continue to provide opportunities for different parts of campus to connect and mingle.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I want school representatives to participate in our conversations. If something can't be done, then explain and help navigate a way or path so we can achieve what we envision.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

With Athletics it can be hectic with sports and travel and practices, but most of our departments have open doors and communication when possible. Whether stopping by in person or sending a quick text, it can always lead to something great.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a strong work ethic, a positive attitude, and a love for UAB not just as an employee or alumni, but as someone who has grown up in Birmingham and loves this city and university.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I have not served long on Staff Council, but I love the way things are going now. My only change would be more fun events for employees. Fun does not always equal money needed to be spent. Students find out how to make the best of things and get plenty of fun events that take planning but not much in the cost department. I want employees to have that same opportunities as well. Not just with what staff council can do but across the university as a whole. We work hard for this school, to provide for ourselves and our families. Let's throw some more fun in there when we have the time.



## Letessia Monique Penick

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I want the Staff Council to prioritize staff development and career mobility across the university. UAB's success relies on its dedicated staff, and investing in growth opportunities like training, mentorship, collaboration, and transparent advancement boosts retention, morale, and excellence.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I plan to involve school representatives by keeping the process open and collaborative, ensuring their ideas and perspectives help shape decisions from the start.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I plan to communicate with staff in my unit by keeping an open line of communication through regular check-ins, quick updates, newsletter inserts, and availability when people want to share ideas or concerns.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring strengths from my work in advancement services, along with cross-department collaboration and experience in multiple nonprofits, which helps me connect data, people, and mission in a way that supports thoughtful, effective decision-making.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing about the Staff Council, it would be to boost its visibility so more staff know what's happening and how to get involved. I hope to join the Council to help strengthen that connection across campus.



## Rachel Bailes

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Connection between staff members. UAB is such a large place and I think it is important for Staff Council to foster more opportunities for staff members to build relationships with one another.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** The Office of the Provost includes a variety of units, but those units all have the shared priority of supporting students. I plan to seek the opinions of staff members across units to ensure that decisions positively impact all units.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will provide venues for staff communication via email, Teams, or other channels that are most effective and convenient for all staff members.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I have worked in higher education for over five years and have developed a strong understanding of the culture for staff. My experience at multiple different institutions provides me with a unique perspective on the staff experience at UAB and I hope to use that perspective to improve the culture for UAB staff members.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Communication of resources to staff. Because UAB is such a large and complex institution, it can be difficult to find answers to questions about how things should be done or who to contact about certain topics. I would like to see Staff Council create and maintain a database that consolidates campus-wide resources for staff to ensure they are aware of the proper procedures for various tasks.



## Sarah Smith

**What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Work-life balance of staff.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I will encourage them to attend events and keep them in the know about opportunities to get involved.

**How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will share during our monthly staff meetings. I will also plan to send out departmental emails when information is time-sensitive.

**What strengths do you bring?**

I am a patient person, very organized, and love being involved on campus.

**If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I am not sure yet - but, potentially more visibility of staff council across campus.



## Amy Raynor

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Parking at UAB seems to be an ongoing issue and complaint from many, stating long waiting lists and the process of cleaning-up those lists once people graduate, retire, are terminated, etc. Many show they have been on the waiting list in the same spot for many years.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Involving school representatives in decision making processes can be done through committees & advisory boards to ensure collaboration and representation from their departments; suggestion boxes and open forums can also help facilitate input on decisions.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I plan to communicate with staff in my unit through email, Zoom meetings, and in-person monthly meetings to keep everyone updated on key topics discussed with the Staff Council and to recruit for any special projects throughout the year.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am a trustworthy person of integrity, proactive and highly-motivated, able to collaborate and instill teamwork, multi-tasker and very organized, have effective communication, the ability to understand staff concerns to build trust, and I'm able to network to connect others.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

The focus on engagement could be an opportunity for the Staff Council to continue to improve. It's important to foster greater communication and involvement across departments and the UAB community.



## Kathryn Moore Trammell

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Professional development and career pathing for staff. Staff members often have deep institutional expertise but limited formal pathways for advancement or skill recognition. I'd like to see UAB invest in structured development opportunities that help staff grow within their roles and across the institution, not just through oneoff trainings but through intentional programming that acknowledges the full scope of what staff contribute.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** My approach would be to function as a conduit, not just a messenger. I would proactively solicit input before meetings from UABSO staff before agenda items are finalized, so their voices shape what goes to council, and not just what gets communicated afterward.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I'll share updates via email and make myself available for quick conversations in person or by email whenever staff have questions or concerns.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I'm a strong communicator and relationship-builder. I work with a broad range of external partners and internal stakeholders in my CE role, which has sharpened my ability to listen well, manage expectations, and move things forward diplomatically. I'm also highly organized and systems-oriented, which means I'll show up prepared and follow through.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

From the outside, it can sometimes feel like staff input goes into a process that isn't very visible. People don't always know whether their concerns were heard or what happened as a result. More transparent communication about how staff voices actually influenced outcomes would go a long way toward building trust and encouraging broader participation.



## Sharron Brownlee

**What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Look into better parking solutions for Staff.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** By making sure they know what is going on, on campus

**How will you communicate with staff within your unit?** I will communicate through email

**What strengths do you bring?**

I have served 1 term/2 years already, but it wasn't until this year that I realize my full duties of emailing the information acquired in council meeting to the staff in my department. Strengths would be that it only took me 2 years to fully understand my assignment.

**If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?** Nothing.



## Ginny Harvard

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One thing I'd like to see prioritized is clearer and more accessible professional development and career growth opportunities for staff. I think Staff Council can play an important role in helping bridge that gap—making sure staff understand what opportunities exist and advocating for more equitable access across units. When staff feel supported in their growth, it benefits not just them, but the entire university.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I think it starts with making it easy and natural for employees to share their input and ideas. I'd want to involve them by creating consistent, structured opportunities to contribute and offer feedback, such as regular check-ins, shared documents, or even informal conversations. From my experience working with different policies and departments, I know how valuable it is to hear perspectives from across campus before making recommendations. I'd also make sure to close the loop by sharing how their feedback is being used so people feel heard and engaged.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I try to communicate in a straightforward and approachable way, and I'd continue that here. I'd share regular updates through email but keep them concise and easy to read. I also value more personal communication, checking in with colleagues, having quick conversations, and creating space for people to ask questions or share concerns.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

One of my biggest strengths here is my familiarity with institutional policies and how things actually work behind the scenes. I understand how decisions move through the UAB system, which helps me to think practically about what's realistic and how to advocate effectively. I'm also a good listener and try to understand where people are coming from and find ways to connect ideas across different groups. I'm reliable, detail-oriented, and committed to following through, which I think is important when representing others.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would focus on making the work of Staff Council more visible and easier for staff to connect with. From what I've seen, there's often a lot of good work happening, but not everyone is aware of it or knows how it impacts them. I think even small changes, like clearer updates, more informal engagement opportunities, or simplifying how information is shared could make a big difference. The more connected staff feel to the council, the stronger its impact will be.



## Jasmine Searcy

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Prioritizing staff well-being and recognition, ensuring that staff feel valued, supported, and acknowledged for the work they do every day

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council? I**

plan to involve school representatives by making sure there are consistent and easy ways for them to share input throughout the year, not just at certain times. That could include regular check-ins, quick feedback opportunities, and open conversations where they can bring ideas and concerns forward.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I'm committed to creating open and approachable ways for colleagues to share their ideas, concerns, and experiences. I try to listen with intention, speak up with integrity, and make sure different voices are represented. Through collaboration, transparency, and genuinely caring about people, I want to help create a workplace where everyone feels supported, valued, and able to thrive. I currently serve on the Staff Council in the School of Public Health, which has given me even more perspective on how important consistent communication and engagement are across teams.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

My strengths are collaboration, creating fun and inviting spaces, and helping develop practical solutions for staff needs. I enjoy working with others to bring ideas to life, and I try to make sure the process feels engaging and inclusive.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

One idea I would love to see is a structured mentoring system for new staff, where they are paired with someone in a similar role or job title. Having someone who already understands the day-to-day expectations and culture at UAB can make a big difference in helping new staff feel supported and confident. That built-in connection would give them a go-to person for questions, guidance, and encouragement during their first year or two. I think it would strengthen onboarding, improve retention, and help new staff feel like they truly belong here from the start.



**Kristen Craig**

**What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

There is a significant and well placed emphasis on the professionalism of UAB staff and the individual and collective impact of this group to the UAB enterprise, and this is truly something to celebrate. However, the advancement of staff to positions that is reflective of this impact and encouraging of a rewarding career trajectory is vague. All too often a statement is made that in order to advance, employees must leave UAB. An inspiring and beneficial university priority could be the elimination of this mindset, and instead, an effort to create career paths that encourage and recognize hard work, exceptional results, personal and professional growth, and aspirational opportunities as a norm and not an exception.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** It is important to inform school representatives of the issues and priorities of the UAB Staff Council in an effort to include the broader community in the voice of the Staff Council. The role of the school representative is to inform school members of these priorities as well as to represent and communicate the opinions of the school back to the Staff Council.

**How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

The Collat School of Business has an internal staff council allowing for the development and support of staff and the opportunity for staff voices to be shared, as well as a staff representative on the Collat Executive Council where ideas are shared and discussed.

**What strengths do you bring?**

I am proud of my role as a staff member at UAB and hope to represent and encourage that same pride in others, as well as benefit from the very same pride and enthusiasm of my fellow colleagues.

**If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I am fairly new to the Staff Council, and therefore my recommendation for a change is not without the need to more fully understand the scope of the Staff Council. With my limited experience in mind, one thing I would change about the Staff Council is to highlight any existing work with the Benefits Committee, or to begin an initiative if one does not exist, to help employees understand the impact of our retirement benefits and how to maximize these benefits while considering the many implications of the various plans available. Specifically, what steps can employees take on a consistent basis to ensure that they are making informed decisions at every stage of employment in order to best prepare for this milestone.



## Tanisha Davison

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would like Staff Council to focus on is strengthening transparent communication and equitable access to professional development opportunities for staff across all departments. In my role within Graduate Medical Education, I've seen firsthand how access to information, training, and growth opportunities can vary widely depending on the department, role, or leadership structure. While UAB offers valuable resources, not all staff are consistently aware of them or able to take advantage of them due to communication gaps or lack of support. I believe

Staff Council is uniquely positioned to help bridge this gap by advocating for more standardized communication channels or coming up with a platform similar to Applause that highlights and lists all the professional development opportunities we offer. Investing in staff development not only enhances individual career progression but also strengthens retention, job satisfaction, and overall institutional success so I feel like that's something we should prioritize.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council? I**

plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process by prioritizing consistent communication and intentional engagement. I would establish regular check-ins with representatives within the School of Medicine. I think by doing this I will make sure that I am not only representing my own perspective, but actively gathering input from staff across roles and departments. I would also create a simple way to collect and track feedback using tools like SurveyMonkey or Google Forms so that way data can be clearly identified and brought back to the Staff Council for us to discuss. I want to make sure people feel heard and informed.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will communicate with staff within my unit through a combination of consistent updates, open communication channels, and intentional accessibility. I plan to share regular updates following Staff Council meetings, whether through brief email summaries or quick check-ins, to ensure staff are informed about key discussions, decisions, and opportunities that may impact them. My goal is to remain approachable and accessible. I want staff to feel comfortable reaching out at any time, knowing that their input is valued and will be represented. By fostering transparency and consistency, I aim to build trust and ensure that staff feel both informed and heard.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a strong combination of organization, communication, and a genuine commitment to advocacy and service. In my role within Graduate Medical Education, I manage multiple programs and work closely with leadership, faculty, and trainees. This has strengthened my ability to stay highly organized, balance competing priorities, and ensure that important processes move forward efficiently and accurately. I also pride myself on being a clear and thoughtful communicator. Whether I am coordinating complex logistics or sharing important updates, I focus on making information accessible, professional, and actionable. I believe strong communication is essential for building trust and ensuring that people feel informed and included. I am naturally collaborative and solutions-oriented. I look for practical ways to improve processes and support those around me.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing about the Staff Council, it would be to increase visibility and awareness of its initiatives and impact across all staff levels. Staff Council plays an important role in representing and advocating for staff, but not all employees fully understand what it does, how to engage with it, or how its work directly impacts them. Greater visibility leads to greater impact, and I would be excited to contribute to making Staff Council more approachable, understood, and connected to the people it serves.



## Ebonee Whitson

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would like Staff Council to elevate is staff well-being, particularly around workload balance and burnout. In my work supporting students, I see firsthand how committed staff are and how often we show up for others, even when our own capacity is stretched. Prioritizing staff well-being means acknowledging those realities and advocating for sustainable expectations, access to support, and opportunities for growth.

When staff feel supported and valued, it strengthens not only morale and retention, but the overall success of the university community.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I plan to involve school representatives by focusing on relationship-building and open communication. That means regularly checking in, listening to their perspectives, and keeping them informed about what's happening and why. I want representatives to feel comfortable sharing feedback and confident that their voices help shape Staff Council decisions.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I plan to communicate with staff in my unit by continuing to build on the relationships that are already established. I value open communication and collaboration, and I would work to keep staff informed, invite feedback, and share opportunities to engage with Staff Council initiatives. My goal is to collaborate with staff in a way that promotes the goals of Staff Council while ensuring their voices and perspectives are represented.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

Some strengths I bring are being personable, approachable, and grounded in good character. I value building genuine relationships and believe goodwill, trust, and open communication are essential to working well together. I place a strong emphasis on face-to-face interactions and taking time to truly get to know my coworkers. My background in social work has reinforced the importance of empathy, active listening, and creating supportive spaces. I strive to be someone my colleagues feel comfortable connecting with professionally, sharing ideas, and exploring opportunities for growth, while maintaining open lines of communication and collaboration.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would not change anything about Staff Council, as I am still learning about its structure and impact. I believe in taking time to understand what is working well before suggesting changes, and I value listening and learning before offering recommendations.



## **Fleurette Pruitt**

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Parking payment scale for employees, cost of parking has been a concern for a great while. Why should employees have to pay to come to work?

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

Keep communication open and honest between them and myself.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will talk to them.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am organized and I'm enthused to work with others across campus to help make this institute a more pleasurable place to work.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I will hold my response until I can get a better idea of how well the system works.



## Allyson Kaley Mills

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would like Staff Council to focus on is expanding and better communicating professional development opportunities for newer employees. I have been at UAB for one year, and one of the aspects I value most is the strong sense of community that makes a large university feel like a small family. I've enjoyed building connections within my unit and across campus through various events. However, I have noticed that professional development opportunities for new staff are not always easy to find or widely communicated. Entering a large

institution like UAB can feel overwhelming, and involvement is often the key to helping employees feel connected and supported. Opportunities such as serving on committees, attending workshops and trainings, and participating in leadership development exist, but they are often shared through word of mouth rather than through centralized communication. Increasing visibility and access to these opportunities would help new employees feel more welcomed, engaged, and invested in the university. By improving communication and creating new pathways for involvement and collaboration, Staff Council can play an important role in strengthening staff connection and professional growth across campus.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council? I**

plan to involve school representatives by encouraging open communication and intentional collaboration throughout the decision-making process. This includes seeking input from people early, creating opportunities for feedback, and ensuring that perspectives from different units are heard and considered before decisions are made. I also believe transparency is essential. By clearly communicating updates, explaining decisions, and encouraging representatives to share information with their respective schools and units, Staff Council can foster trust and ensure staff feel informed and included. Creating space for dialogue and follow-up helps ensure that decision-making is collaborative rather than one-sided.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will communicate with staff within my unit through multiple established channels, including our team's Microsoft Teams channel and our monthly staff meetings. These platforms allow for timely and effective communication and ensure that important information such as upcoming events, policy updates, changes, or Staff Council initiatives is shared consistently.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring strong communication skills, a collaborative mindset, and a genuine commitment to staff engagement and advocacy. In my role, I regularly communicate information clearly and thoughtfully, ensuring that messages are accessible and relevant to different audiences. I am intentional about listening to others and representing their perspectives accurately. As a newer employee, I also bring a fresh perspective on the staff experience at UAB. I understand how overwhelming a large institution can feel and recognize the importance of connection, involvement, and clear communication. I am proactive, service-oriented, and committed to supporting initiatives that help staff feel valued, informed, and engaged across the university.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

One change I would like to see is increased transparency and earlier communication regarding Staff Council events and initiatives. While newsletters are an effective way to share information, I believe combining them with more proactive and engaging communication methods would help staff feel more informed and involved. Expanding visibility through campus outreach such as information tables at events, and promoting Staff Council through social media would increase awareness and participation across units. Social media, in particular, offers an engaging way to connect with staff university-wide. Initiatives like the Be Seen in Green campaign could be enhanced by highlighting staff through Instagram stories, either by capturing photos around campus or allowing staff to submit their own. These approaches create a more interactive experience and help staff feel recognized, connected, and informed.



## Jeremy Bagley

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like staff to have a stronger voice in decision-making. It is important to listen to the ideas, suggestions, and perspectives of all staff members when considering decisions that impact the university. Including Staff Council updates in departmental emails, meetings and other university events can improve visibility and accessibility for all staff.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Communication is key. I believe in creating an open, accessible space for sharing ideas and feedback, and in following up so staff know their input has been heard.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I plan to add language to my email signature that gives staff within my unit an easy way to schedule a meeting, Zoom, or phone call. They are also welcome to stop by my office for a conversation. I want to remain as approachable and accessible as possible.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring approachability, strong communication skills, and a genuine willingness to listen, along with an open-minded respect for different perspectives.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I believe new and recent hires would benefit from becoming more familiar with Staff Council and its purpose. Proactive communication welcoming new employees, along with face-to-face introductions, can create a strong first impression and provide an excellent opportunity to encourage greater staff engagement.



## Khalid Freij

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like Staff Council to prioritize creating clearer career pathways and advancement opportunities for staff. Many staff members are eager to grow within the university but aren't always sure what that path looks like or how to get there, especially if transitioning to a faculty position.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I plan to keep lines of communication open with school representatives to actively collaborate rather than message afterwards.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I'll prioritize clear, regular communication through the channels staff already use like email updates and informal conversations to share what's being discussed at the council level in plain language. I'll make it easy for staff to raise concerns or ideas they'd like me to bring forward.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring strong listening and communication skills. I'm organized and dependable, which means I'll show up prepared for meetings, follow through on subcommittee commitments, and manage my time well across competing responsibilities. I also have a deep passion for making UAB a better place to work, particularly for research staff and bring thoughtful, engaged representation at the table.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would prioritize improving how staff benefits are communicated, particularly to research staff who may not realize the full range of ways they can use available resources. For example, some staff are unaware that professional development funds can be applied to research conferences, not just traditional professional development events like workshops or training courses. That's a meaningful benefit that goes underutilized simply because the information isn't reaching the right people. I'd like to see the Staff Council take a more active role in ensuring benefit communications are specific, practical, and tailored to the realities of different units, so staff can actually take advantage of what's available to them, especially research staff.



## Reginald Battle

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like to see more service amongst the Birmingham community. I believe that UAB is full of resources and kind-hearted people that would be willing to give their efforts to the less fortunate through unity and volunteer work.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I would hope to leverage the influence I have from actively serving UAB's Management and HR Advisory Council.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I would prefer to connect with them face to face however, Teams offers the opportunity to communicate virtually and a community style written communication. So, if not in person, Teams would be the way to go.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring good planning skills and a ton of creative ideas.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would like to see more staff events similar to the upcoming Be Seen in Green mostly because I feel like it's just always nice to see everyone outside of a Teams meeting every now and then.



## Alison Nichols

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Increase recognition of outstanding UAB staff members and foster a workplace culture that inspires our best efforts each day while reducing the risk of apathy.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

Attend regular student gatherings—such as club, organization, and team meetings—since these students are already engaged in extracurricular activities. Share ideas with them and invite their feedback.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Working in the Campus Warehouse provides daily opportunities to interact with staff from Campus Maintenance, Building Services, and Elevator Services. It also allows for regular communication with supervisors by email to gather their perspectives and feedback.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I'm a people-oriented person with strong problem-solving skills. Driving a school bus for 18 years and serving on Chelsea's City Council for four years taught me that listening is the most valuable tool on the shelf. Listening validates others' ideas, encourages positive change, and helps build a true team spirit.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Promote awareness of the Staff Council and the ways it benefits everyone at UAB. Increasing employee and student involvement will help strengthen our sense of community and enhance their UAB experience.





## Deana Heath

**What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?** Practical, organization-level initiatives to improve work–life balance

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

By maintaining open lines of communication and actively sharing information about emerging issues.

**How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Via Teams and Outlook messages.

**What strengths do you bring?**

I bring a caring approach and a willingness to advocate for the needs and perspectives of others.

**If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I would focus on improving staff involvement by creating more opportunities for participation in Staff Council activities, ensuring staff feel included, valued, and a true sense of belonging.



## Jess Wylie

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Making the day-to-day life at work easier for staff and temporary specialist, specifically regarding logistics and parking.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Keeping an open line of communication open as being straightforward and honest about the reasoning behind decisions.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

In addition to sending regular communications, building rapport and trust with colleagues to represent their needs and goals.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am an excellent listener and analyzer. I carefully weigh all thoughts and opinions and help my teammates come to a consensus for the better of the organization.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

I think it would always be nice for the staff council to have more say, more of a seat at the table when it comes to larger, university-wide decision making.



## Jonathan Scott Glenn

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

Getting people hired more efficiently. We do need to find the best and right people for the roles we have but it seems like the hiring process can be made less confusing for both sides of the table.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I will use people's knowledge and past experiences to help guide Staff Council. I am starting my 5th year here at UAB and I am listening to people across Campus to help guide my journey. I feel I am part of a new or the next generation here at UAB and I am open to learning from the past group that has gotten UAB to where it is now. I do have some new and different ideas about UAB as well.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I like to shoot people straight and not beat around the bush when communicating to my group. I have an open door policy and feel that people can approach me when they need to talk about something. Just keeping my groups informed on all the opportunities that UAB has to offer can go along way in their career here.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I am pretty outgoing as a person. I believe it is best to lead by example. I am respectful of others that I deal with across Campus. I also try to keep an open mind to people's opinions and situations.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Honestly, I don't know much about Staff Council. I don't think it is fair to say what I would change not having been a part of the Council before.



## Elena Kidd

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One priority I would like Staff Council to make is addressing staff burnout and promoting self-care. Staff work hard each day and there should be greater recognition of workload challenges and support for staff well-being.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** I plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process by being intentional about fairness and equity and ensuring that everyone has a voice. This includes reaching out to a range of staff from within the school.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Staff newsletter and staff list-serv; SOPH events; face-to-face communication

### **What strengths do you bring?**

My biggest strength is my strong dedication to supporting the staff at the School of Public Health and advocating for their needs.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Improved recognition of staff contributions



## Shemeka Gillespie

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

I would like Staff Council to continue the theme of community as a university priority. We as staff tend to come to work and many of us work without leaving the walls of our office space. With the university being such a large entity, creating small pockets of community that stretch across units, can provide support and improve mental wellbeing.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?**

I plan to involve school representatives in the decision making process through meetings, debriefs, and even brainstorming sessions just for sharing any thoughts that anyone may have. Transparency is important.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

I will communicate with actual words, when passing in the halls simply saying hello is just as important as an email sharing information. I'll also share news via emails, flyers, table pop ups, etc. Communication is one of the tried and trues way of creating community and support.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I bring empathy, support, vision, drive, listening, and perspective. I also bring the ability to hear a plan, and help with the steps needed to orchestrate it.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Staff Council is doing great things within the University. If I could change one thing, it would be to amplify Staff Council's presence on campus so people can know what we do. Many times when working tables for Staff Council, I am asked, well what do you, what is it for? If we are able to amplify the Staff Council presence it would be great, because Staff Council does many great things, but others are just not aware.



## Anetra Michelle Coleman

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

To make sure that the Staff Council is transparent when acting as a liason between the staff and administration of UAB.

### **How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council? By**

making sure they are informed about what is going on and encouraging them to particiapate in the dfferent activities that staff council provides.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

In my department any time an event is happening or there is some type of communication that needs to go out from staff council, I go to the person who is designated to put out all communication to our organization. I also answer any questions that staff may have about staff council.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I have been on the council for 5 years with this last year being co-chair of a committee. I have gained an understanding of how the council works and interacts with the university.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

There is nothing at this time that I can think of that I would change about staff council. I think staff council does a good job of communicating information to staff and speaking on their behalf to the adminstration. I would just say to continue that and make improvements/adjustments when neccessary.



## Fatima Igdoura

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

As the current co-chair of the Staff Development and Recognition committee, I'd like to continue making a commitment to providing resources, growth opportunities and recognition tools to university employees. Taking care of the people here should be one of our top priorities.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** Staff Council dips its toes in so many areas across the institution and the community. Sharing the meetings, events and initiatives that Staff Council hosts and/or supports with our respective units is the first step - and once you start attending the meetings or events, you realize the impact that your voice has as a whole in Staff Council as a representative/member. Involvement can be baby steps to instill confidence in the system and the people that are part of Staff Council.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

Within my unit I forward reminders for meetings and/or initiatives that Staff Council has - as involvement grows, I'm hoping to incorporate major news items in different unit newsletters.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I like to think that I bring a positive and bright energy to everything that I do - I want people to enjoy the parts of the day that I get the privilege of spending with them. I'm also committed to the growth and development of staff at UAB and will continue to be part of initiatives that support that.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

Not so much change, but try to continue - maintaining the conversation with "leadership" so that we can continue to provide transparency to staff on any changes, questions or concerns they may have re: institutional decisions. Maintaining that trust and providing the platform is difficult, but I believe that Staff Council has done an excellent job so far and can continue to do so!



## Jarvis Jones

### **What is one thing you would like Staff Council to make a university priority?**

One clear initiative many groups can support.

**How do you plan to involve school representatives in the decision-making process of the Staff Council?** As the representative for the School of Medicine on Staff Council, I intend to serve with collaboration and inclusion at the heart of my role.

### **How will you communicate with staff within your unit?**

After each Staff Council meeting, I will share clear, accessible recaps with school staff so everyone stays informed and can meaningfully engage, not just those directly on the council.

### **What strengths do you bring?**

I believe the best representatives are listeners first. I make it a priority to hear people out fully before drawing conclusions, which helps me bring well-rounded, informed perspectives to the council rather than assumptions. Simply put, I bring heart, experience, and a genuine desire to make the Staff Council feel less like a distant body and more like a real extension of the people it serves.

### **If you could change one thing about the Staff Council, what would it be and why?**

If I could change one thing about the Staff Council, it would be its visibility and accessibility to the everyday staff member.