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Garrett to Employee Assembly: lessen the burden



In her first meeting with the Employee Assembly (EA) Sept. 2, President Elizabeth Garrett said she believes staff are integral to Cornell's mission, and she addressed staff questions about this fall's campuswide initiative to reduce bureaucracy and streamline academic and other processes.

Noting that she visited with numerous administrative units over the summer, Garrett said, "One of the things that is very clear is how dedicated the staff employees in this institution are to our mission."

"Every one of us who works in administration and in staff roles is integral to the academic mission, whether it is making the campus a place where people can flourish and interact and stay warm in the winter; whether it is making sure that people are paid; making sure that their benefits are appropriate; ensuring that our students are taken care of – those are all things that are absolutely essential to the academic mission," Garrett said.

She described Cornell's academic mission as twofold: training the next generation of leaders through Cornell's undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, and creating an environment in which faculty can pursue research, creative work, scholarship and engagement that "change the world."

"It takes faculty and students to do that, but it really also takes terrific professionals to enable that," she said. Staff ensure that the university achieves its mission in a way that "allows us always to aim for excellence," she said.

As for the role staff will play in the upcoming strategic planning process, Garrett said the university will seek the input of faculty, staff and students. Discussion is needed not just at the planning stage of an initiative, but at implementation and assessment. "I also think that it is very important ... that we hear from the people who are living under the initiative," she said.

Referring to her Aug. 20 memo, Garrett said she tried to focus more on the “notion of burden” than on cost reduction or streamlining, though those are part of the process as well. “You sometimes forget that some of what happens in a process or an unwieldy bureaucracy is just a burden on students and faculty and staff,” she said. “I really want us to focus as much on burden as anything else, thinking about what are the unnecessary things that we’re asking faculty, staff or students to do.”

For example, she asked, are there some things that were priorities but aren’t any more? Are there processes that made sense when implemented singly, but together created a burden? Are there some things initiated to solve a problem that no longer needs solving?

She said that because the university is always going to strive for excellence, its ambitions are always going to be greater than its resources. Analyzing processes and priorities, and looking for ways to streamline and lessen the burdens, should be a regular part of campus life, she said.

“It’s often the people on the ground who have a better sense of how the burden is being felt than the people who are at the top,” she said. “I think staff can be some of the best sources of information for how we can do things better.”

Garrett was positive about the university’s prospects: “I do think we are in a trajectory to be in a stronger financial position now than we have been for many years. ... I am very optimistic about what our future holds.”

About the role of the EA, Garrett said, “We see you as one of the very best places for us to get information about what is going on in the various parts of this institution.”

The inauguration of President Garrett, Sept. 18

All faculty, staff and students are encouraged to join the inauguration celebration of Elizabeth Garrett, 13th president of Cornell University, Sept. 18.

[Installation Ceremony](#)

- 10 a.m.-noon, Arts Quad
- Watch live stream on [CornellCast](#)

[Community Picnic](#)

- Noon-2 p.m., Ag Quad
- FREE community picnic complete with a variety of fare from Cornell Catering and local vendors, student and community performers, and the unveiling of President Garrett’s ice cream.

[“Democracy and Inequality” Academic Panel](#)

- 3-4:30 p.m., Bailey Hall
- Watch live stream on [CornellCast](#)

[Homecoming Fireworks and Laser Light Show](#)

- 8 p.m., Schoellkopf Field
- Doors open at 7 p.m.

For more information, visit the Inauguration website at <http://inauguration.cornell.edu/>

New boilers create greater steam efficiency



Cornell's Central Energy Plant gained some weight this past month – about 100 tons. Its gain is Cornell's loss, helping the university create heat and energy at about 85 percent efficiency, or more than twice the efficiency as a typical electricity-generating plant.

The difference? Two new boilers were moved in, one August 20, and the second Sept. 2, to provide reliability to heat the campus in the coldest hours of winter should the campus experience maintenance or gas fuel interruptions. They were made by Babcock and Wilcox, one of the oldest and most respected industrial and utility boiler manufacturers in the world.

They join five other, larger boilers in the Central Energy Plant to provide steam to heat the nearly 14 million square feet in 150 buildings that are connected to the campus steam system. The steam in nearly all applications is used to heat closed "hydraulic" heating systems, where water or water mixed with anti-freeze heats the buildings.

Each boiler is about 20 feet high and produces about 75,000 lbs. of steam per hour; moving them into the plant was a logistical and engineering feat.

Day of Caring to be held Sept. 16

The United Way of Tompkins County will celebrate its 19th annual Stephen E. Garner Day of Caring and kick off its 2015-16 Community Campaign Sept. 16, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at Stewart Park's large pavilion. Members of the Cornell and local communities are invited to a program at noon.

This will be the 13th year the Day of Caring will include a food and personal care items drive. Last year more than 14,000 pounds of food and personal care items were donated.

Donations can be dropped off in advance of the Day of Caring at boxes around campus and at the United Way of Tompkins County, 313 N. Aurora Street, Ithaca, NY.

Suggested items include:

Non-perishable food items

Canned vegetables, fruit and fruit juices, canned tuna and stews, boxed macaroni and cheese, instant potatoes, coffee, tea, canned milk, pasta, spaghetti sauce, soups, peanut butter and jelly, brownie and cake mixes.

Personal care and household items

Diapers, liquid detergent, trash bags, shampoo and conditioner, bar soap, deodorants, toilet paper, paper towels, tissue, toothbrushes and toothpaste, cleaning supplies, pet food and dental floss.

School supplies

Notebooks, pens, pencils, backpacks, crayons, markers, rulers, binders, wide-ruled paper and art supplies.

Police and transportation staff educate cyclists

To help new and returning cyclists navigate the campus safely, the Cornell University Police Department (CUPD) and Cornell Transportation Services will be stationed next week at intersections across campus, educating cyclists about pedestrian and bicycle laws and thanking them for obeying the rules of the road.

This collaborative educational effort is intended to increase cyclists' awareness that they must obey the same rules of the road as motorists. Cornell police enforce traffic laws throughout the year, and cyclists can receive moving violations for not adhering to the rules.

CUPD Chief Kathy Zoner said, "The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration stated that 5,478 pedestrians and bicyclists were killed in crashes in 2013. That is 15 people per day in the United States. Our goal is to educate the Cornell community about the rules of the road so that we are not part of these statistics. Enforcement is an integral part of that education."

Did you know a bicycle must be equipped with:

- A brake capable of making the tires skid on dry level pavement.
- A bell, horn or other audible device that can be heard from at least 100 feet.
- A headlight and taillight when riding at night.

Did you know both motorists and cyclists:

- Must properly signal turns.
- Must be on the right side (part) of the road, not the left side (part) of the road.
- May not wear more than one earphone attached to an audio device.
- Are prohibited from riding/driving on sidewalks.

In addition to creating awareness, this outreach gives CUPD and Cornell Transportation Services a chance to thank cyclists for riding in ways that are respectful for safety of all roadway users.

When asked why this outreach is so important, Susan Powell, co-chair of the Cornell Bicycle and Pedestrian Traffic Safety Committee, replied: "How do you feel about a half-ton object under the control of a stranger rushing right at you and whizzing past just a few feet away at a relative speed of 60 mph? Driving is feasible only because most drivers know the rules of the road and follow them most of the time. As motorists, this allows most of us to feel that driving on the road is usually safe because we know what to expect from other drivers. When bicycle riders do not follow the traffic laws, unpredictable behavior puts them and other roadway users at risk. As bicyclists, we can't expect motorists (or pedestrians) to be happy about sharing the road with us if we act in ways that are unpredictable."

Many online resources can help people educate themselves and others on pedestrian and bicycle laws:

- [Cornell Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety @ Cornell University](#)
- [Bike Walk Tompkins](#)
- [Safe New York](#)
- [Know Your Pedestrian & Bicycle Laws PDF Handout](#)
- [US DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety](#)

Gary Cremeens is project associate II in Transportation Services' transportation demand management area.

Cornell Wellness expands reach to employees



The Cornell Wellness Program now offers private, individual “wellness consultations,” with no membership necessary, to all employees, retirees and spouses or partners. Wellness consultations can be scheduled to discuss nutrition or fitness, or to be coached on other topics related to successful behavior change.

“Our goal is to reach individuals who, because of professional, personal or financial constraints, haven’t been able to take full advantage of what we offer,” says Beth McKinney, director of Cornell Wellness. She adds, “We are hoping to help more people reach their fitness, nutrition and well-being goals. We want to help more people be successful – with their health, with their work/life balance, with clarifying their goals.”

Cornell Wellness staff traditionally meet people at the program’s offices in Helen Newman Hall, but to be more convenient they can also set up meetings virtually, over the phone or at various locations on- and off-campus. McKinney says, “With so many of our employees located over such a large campus – and around the world – we don’t expect they can all come to us. We want to meet them where they are, both literally and figuratively. We can do that by meeting closer to their office, talking over the phone or even virtually via WebEx.”

But not everything is changing. Recreation memberships (formerly known as Wellness Program memberships) will still be available for the same fee (\$175 per year) and include access to such opportunities as the fitness facilities, group fitness classes, pools, and Healthy Aging Program.

Additional information can be found at wellness.cornell.edu.

Workshops on women and investing offered this fall

A special series of workshops on “Women and Investing,” presented by Fidelity Investments, will be held this fall in G10 Biotechnology Building. Register for one or more.

Women and Investing – Women work hard for their money and their money should work hard for them. Introduction by Mary Opperman, Cornell vice president for human resources and safety services; keynote speaker Alexandra Taussig, senior vice president for marketing and business management with Fidelity, and an alumna of Cornell. Oct. 6, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Light lunch will be provided. RSVP: 1-800-642-7131.

Get Organized – Women have many priorities to manage, so getting organized and taking control of finances can be a smart way to find balance and feel confident. Learn why financial wellness is so important; get essentials to build a budget, balance your savings and debt priorities, and plan for other goals. Oct. 27, noon-1 p.m. RSVP: 1-800-642-7131.

Build and Own Your Plan – You will turn from a saver into an investor as you will learn about women’s planning and savings strengths, investing basics, defining your investing personality, and staying on track to meet your goals. Nov. 19, noon-1 p.m. RSVP: 1-800-642-7131.

Retirement Income Planning “On Your Own” – You will learn why it is important to plan on your own; decide when you will be able to retire; estimate how long your money may last; and prepare for challenges you may face in retirement. Dec. 1, noon-1 p.m. RSVP: 1-800-642-7131.

*Fidelity Investments is an approved provider of the Cornell University retirement plans and the SUNY Optional Retirement Plan.
