

President's Advisory Council
Thursday, March 9, 2023
4 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Zoom

Present: Amy Brendmoen, Brooke Anttila-Escoto, Zahra Bahmani, David Berg, Andrew Collins, Emmanuel Donaby, Jean Echnacht, Jim Gleb Matt Lindgren, Karin McCabe, Khaliq Rogers, Erica Schumacher, Maggie Zimmerman, Dee Dee Peaslee, Paula Kinney, Greg Rathert, Wendy Roberson, Sheryl Saul, Scott Wilson

Absent: Ryan Caulfield, Sarah Crippen, Zuki Ellis, Jeanelle Foster, Bruce Kessel, Joseph Kroeger, Theresa Malone, Gaye Adams Massey, Tom McCarthy, Ryan O'Connor, Austin Calhoun, Ellen Roster

Welcome

Ms. Brendmoen commenced the meeting at 4:06 p.m., and asked if there were any issues to discuss before beginning the agenda. Mr. Lindgren asked for an update on the testimony Dr. Peaslee provided to the Minnesota State Legislature in January. Dr. Peaslee said she testified along with Chancellor Malhotra and Trustee Soule for the Senate Higher Education Committee, where she spoke on the various support functions the campus provides to students. Dr. Peaslee added she has also met with the college's local legislators, and hosted a legislative breakfast with four sister institutions as part of the advocacy for Minnesota State.

Supporting Saint Paul College Graduates as New Employees

Ms. Saul said her office works with students and recent graduates in helping them to launch a career path, provide resume support, and find a job. She said the current state of unemployment is at a record low, however, the rate is three-times higher for people of color. Ms. Saul noted that supporting new employees starts before they are hired. This includes having concrete, actionable steps that demonstrate the organization is being equitable. When hiring, Ms. Saul said to provide some grace throughout the process. She added some cultures view humility as a virtue, and prospective candidates may feel sharing strengths and accomplishments as being boastful. When onboarding new employees, a mentorship program can be helpful, as new employees may feel more comfortable talking with their mentor rather than their supervisor.

Ms. Saul provided an overview of ConnexMSP. She said the organization and platform was created to ensure professionals of color were recruited, hired, and supported as they begin their careers. The organization focuses on three areas—building resumes through internship and apprenticeship opportunities; improving career pathways; and strengthening professional networks. She added the ConnexMSP network has over 40 partners.

Discussion

Dr. Peaslee asked how many Saint Paul College students were registered with ConnexMSP, and Ms. McCabe asked how a business could utilize the platform. Ms. Saul said to date, 35 students were registered. She said an organization's recruiters could have a profile page with the option to connect with them for informational interviews or resume help.

Ms. Anttila-Escoto asked if the college's Career Services provided coaching to students. Ms. Saul said occasionally events are held on campus. She added an event was held the previous week with a focus on Business and Computer Sciences programs. Twenty-two employers came in, and there were also opportunities for resume review, mock interviews, LinkedIn support, and professional headshots. Mr. Rathert added about 60 students attended the event.

Evolution of Workplace

Dr. Kinney shared emerging trends and the changing landscape of the workplace. She said Minnesota is growing more diverse, and regionally, within the next decade retirees will outnumber children born. Additionally, students have been disproportionately affected by the twin pandemics of COVID and the murder of George Floyd. Students are coming to the institution with high support needs, and the effects of the pandemic will have the next generation of students coming to the college experiencing some learning loss. The workforce is also experiencing a change in generational composition, and different preferences in work environments, organizational culture, leadership styles, and learning styles. Through the change in generations, leadership has gone from a hierarchical model to a more diffused model, as well as a shift to a more digitally socially mobile and global cohort. Ms. Lewis said in the fall of 2022, a facilitation on hybrid work at Saint Paul College was held with members of the College Leadership Team. Findings from this facilitation included a preference for hybrid work that is customized to the needs of students; a desire for autonomy balanced with trust and clear expectations; multiple communication options; and creating an intentional, relational community. Many of these findings align with the characteristics of Generation X and Y. Ms. Lewis added with the shift in compositional and generational diversity, comes a change in employee engagement, as newer generations may be looking for hybrid or flexible schedules, as well as a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Dr. Kinney introduced the ideation exercise, where council members would break out into small groups to discuss ways to further prepare students for the workforce as well as ways to retain emerging generations. After the breakout sessions were complete, each group would provide a debrief of their conversations.

Discussion

Mr. Rogers recommended the college learn what a student's passions and gifts are and help them form a career path around those gifts.

Ms. Anttilla-Escoto said their group discussed ways to cultivate a sense of being part of something greater, as well as being nimble with differing schedules, technology, and different environments.

Ms. Brendmoen discussed the intersection between being comfortable and having clear expectations on how to be successful in their role. Mr. Lindgren said in terms of retention of employees, explaining various pathways to advancement opportunities within their organization can be helpful. He added many rewarding jobs may be in-person and not remote.

Ms. McCabe shared the importance of teaching students negotiation skills. She added career paths may not be linear, and if a job is not the right fit, it may not mean the employee needs to leave the organization.

Ms. Brendmoen adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jennie Lewis

March 28, 2023