



The Facilitator

April 2014
The Newsletter of Facilities Management Services Division

Georgia State
University

Issue 5
April 2014

Some thoughts about Customer Service *By Ramesh Vakamudi*

As we all know, the primary goal of Facilities Management is to provide support services to academic and research activities at Georgia State University. We should deliver such support with exceptional customer service and professionalism. Exceptional customer service can be easily recognized as seen in the following examples:

A United Airlines pilot calls parents of unaccompanied minors during a flight and assures them all is well, serves coffee and food to passengers and walks pets during long flight delays.

A follow up phone call to the customer after completion of a maintenance repair or the completion of a renovation project.

These acts may seem like simple gestures but it is a gesture or experience that a customer will be thankful for and will always remember. Several of our staff members deliver excellent customer service on a daily basis and sometimes receive special recognition. Not too long ago I received a thank you e-mail from one of the faculty members showing their appreciation for some of our staff who helped her in carrying a heavy load of teaching material to her office. Treating our students, faculty, staff and guests with great care and concern is what exceptional customer service is all about. As we go about our day, please remember that we represent GSU everywhere at all times and that great customer service is everyone's job.

An interview with Valerie Woods:

1. What is your current position with GSU? *Supervisor in the Customer Service Center*
2. What happens on a typical day in the Customer Service Center? *Throughout the day, our department receives calls for all types of maintenance problems on campus, custodial clean ups, pest control issues, recycling pick-ups, move requests, set up requests, as well as questions about staff uniforms.*
3. How long have you worked here? *I have worked at GSU since 2000, but have been with Facilities since 2005.*
4. What is your favorite thing about working at GSU? *The people and the downtown campus.*
5. What do you like to do on week-ends? *Traveling, going fishing, and spending time with family and friends.*
6. What is your favorite meal? *Any type of seafood.*
7. What is your dream vacation? *A cruise to Alaska.*



Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Some Thoughts about Customer Service | 1 |
| An Interview with Valerie Woods | 1 |
| Renovation of Centennial Hall 4th floor | 2 |
| The Development of GSU Design Standards | 2 |
| What's Next for Hurt Park? | 3 |
| Tech Talk: Web Working | 3 |
| 2014 Milestone Awards | 4 |
| Benefits of Training | 4 |
| New Employees | 4 |

Editor:

Karen Stark

Assistant Editor:

Regina Anderson

Contributors:

David Blunsch
Jill Chu
Deborah Dunbar
Kenneth Gilkes
Bob Toomy
Jeannie Wright
Ramesh Vakamudi

Training...

Forklift Safety, Arc Flash Training, Aerial Work Platform Safety, Defensive Driving, Van Driving
Contact Kevin Chappell

Renovation of Centennial Hall, 4th Floor *By David Blunski*

The Renovations Unit is currently renovating the 4th floor in Centennial Hall (100 Auburn) for Georgia State University Public Relations. Russell Wham is the Project Superintendent overseeing this project. This job has been partnered with Design & Construction Services (DCS), with Teresa Hegarty as the Project Manager. Architectural drawings and specifications were coordinated through DCS. The project is a complete renovation of the 4th floor for a total of twelve thousand square feet. The scope of work includes partial demolition, millwork, doors & hardware, ceiling tile, flooring, carpet, HVAC, plumbing, electrical and data cabling. The new restroom will utilize innovative water conserving toilets and plumbing fixtures. Construction of this project began the first of March and is currently ongoing. The entire project is expected to be completed by the end of June. Here are a few pictures of the project.



Drywall work at the conference room



Plumbing in restroom batteries



Electrical Room

The Development of GSU Design Standards *by Bob Toomy*

When a new project or a renovations type project is undertaken at Georgia State University, the work follows the GSU design standards for construction. Most people not involved in construction might think the only items of work that need to be standardized are such things as paint colors and carpet, but the list of standardized items and procedures consist of much more than just those items.

There are a number of reasons to have design standards. The most obvious one is to have some degree of uniformity of appearance around the GSU campus. An additional reason is to provide standard specifications to architects in order to simplify and standardize project designs. It is also important to take into consideration long-term efficiencies for the Maintenance and Building Services Departments. An example of such would be using the same type of ceiling light fixtures throughout campus so that Maintenance only has to buy one type of light bulb. Another would be to use the same type of paper towel dispensers so that Building Services only has to stock one type of paper towel. A more complex example would be having the architect on a new project specify a particular type of fire alarm system that could be tied into the existing campus-wide system and thus communicates with the Police and Emergency Operations. From these examples, one can see that design standards affect many departments throughout GSU.

The Design and Construction Services Division is currently going through the process of updating our design standards. The GSU design standards have to be updated every one or two years because of new products coming on line and old ones being discontinued and also because of changes in laws and regulations such as ADA or OSHA. There are a large and diverse number of items that have to be analyzed and possibly upgraded and it takes the collaborative efforts of every member of our staff to accomplish this task. We have taken all the specification sections in the standards (carpet, doors, light fixtures, etc.) and assigned them to different teams. We have also had a series of meetings at which each team presents their recommendations for changes and the entire staff gets an opportunity to make comments and/or offer other suggestions. Once an agreement on the final draft is reached, we will prepare the new design standards manual and issue it to the university at large and to our architect/contractor base.

With this process, we will be able to ensure that the university's facilities provide a high quality and harmonious environment for our students, staff, and faculty and that our physical plant can be managed and maintained in an efficient and economical manner. Design Standards may seem like a dry topic, but they are a very important and integral part of the "behind the scenes" operations here at GSU.



What's Next for Hurt Park? *By Jeannie Wright*

Everybody loves Hurt Park...especially in the springtime. During the warmer months, our students can be seen sunbathing, studying tossing a football or a Frisbee. It's as if this is our "Campus Green". Georgia State University even held their commencement exercises there in 1956. The park is named for Joel Hurt, a prominent business man and developer in Atlanta, and was opened in November of 1940. Hurt Park is memorialized with a plaque at the fountain's circular wall that reads: "This park is dedicated to the memory of Joel Hurt, citizen, engineer, builder, 1850-1926."

The park's centerpiece is the round marble fountain that in times past displayed a spectacular fountain of lights. The water would light up with colored lights that faded in and out and would play for 20 minutes at a time giving numerous changes of color and pattern. It was built at a cost of seventeen hundred dollars and designed by Atlanta sculptor Julian Harris and presented to the city through the Emily and Ernest Woodruff Foundation.

The Student Center folks would like to host various programs, concerts and other events at the park. Currently, there is a plan being discussed to possibly build a stage to allow for such activities as well as installation of better lighting, more seating and some study areas. Since Hurt Park is owned by the city of Atlanta, we have to get their approval to make any improvements. This process involves many steps – too many to name here!

We hope the good folks at the city will allow us to improve the park and restore the historic fountain for the benefit of Georgia State University and the surrounding community. Stay tuned!

Tech Talk: Web Working *by Kenneth Gilkes*

If you have ever visited a website, then chances are you were using a site that utilizes WordPress. What is WordPress? Simply put, WordPress is a content management system (CMS) that is used to build and maintain websites as well as publishing blog posts, articles and information. It is used by nearly 20 percent of the top 10 million websites and is the most popular blogging system in use on the web.

Members of the Facilities Web Committee, Chisolm, Clark, Dukes, Dunbar, Gilkes, & Stark, meet biweekly to organize, strategize and keep our Facilities website lively and addressing content. Georgia State University officially went to WordPress in 2012 and many GSU departments were invited to give it a try for free. According to the committee, the WordPress migration was an overall success. Our Facilities website is going to be a year old at the end of April and since the migration, data shows that page views have increased from 2,993 hits in 2011 to 4,083 hits today.

Working in WordPress is fun and relatively easy. It is user friendly and works well with widgets and plugins such as Flickr which is used to share images and videos. Having the Flickr plugin makes it easier to view our photo gallery which hosts many of our Facilities project pictures from over the years. WordPress is also mobile friendly which benefits smart phone, tablet and laptop users.

Our latest project is creating Web forms using the Gravity Forms plugin. Our old forms were blanced, skewed, overly Xeroxed and faxed copies. The Facilities Web Committee is focused on making forms more available, attractive, uniform and smart for users of the Facilities website. For example, we are neck-deep in migrating the Facilities Modification Request (FMR) form from a PDF to a fun and easy to use responsive Web contact form. In addition, there is other useful out-of-the box technology included for even better communication with customers. All of these changes give the Facilities website a new feel and a more connected and polished look. We look forward to seeing you on the Web!



To: Dean Brook from Mickey Craddock of Georgia Power

I wanted to thank GSU for their participation in our Energy Efficiency Program. You received \$43,819.60 in rebates for the calendar year 2013. This is an estimated kWh reduction of 1,980,582 kWh annually. Thanks to all that made this happen.



2014 Milestone Awards

5 Years: Osman Ali, Clay Anderson, Steve Boswell, Kingsley Chime, James Cook, Edmund Exley Jr., Jonny Finley, Fred Holder, Corine Riley, Louis Sibley, Craig Simon, Norma Soverall, Keith Suman, Marc Taylor, Mitchell Tigner, Rene Torres, Rodriquez Upshaw, Russell Wham

10 Years: Latonya Harris, Teresa Hegarty, Mark Johnson, Ivan Kostadinov, Perlina Larkin, Mekia Mohammad, Tanya Myers, Maria Urbina, Estanislao Zaragoza, Esther Zaragoza

15 Years: Saeed Abdur-Rahman, Brenda Cherry, Deborah Dunbar, Yolanda Harris, Nathaniel Styles, Allen Thomas

20 Years: Kim Bauer, Frank Hall, Randene Tinsley, Evelyn Wilcher, Rhonda Williams

25 Years: Minnie Gaston, Terry Johnson, Kelvin King

30 Years: Sharon Bryant, Phillip McClendon

New employees, January—April 2014

- Building Services: Latavia Austin, Kevin Brown, Zel Britt, Darrell Cameron, Adonis Durden, Rickey Evans, Alvin Fisher, Simeon Ianders, Shaquita Moore
- Maintenance & Operations: Raheem Mustafa, Robert Pettit
- Design & Construction Services: Gowri Pillai

To: Patti Stilson from Shalanda Cofer (RCB)

I just wanted to say thank you to Kelvin King and his moving crew for assisting me with by picking up items for surplus today. What I am really grateful for is that they went over and beyond and moved some furniture around at the last minute. I know that they are on a tight schedule, but they took the time to move them for me anyway. Just wanted to say thank you for the great customer service.

Benefits of Training by Deborah Dunbar

For someone without computer experience, a PC can be an unnerving and unfamiliar piece of hardware. The constant fear of causing some catastrophic error can make it difficult to feel comfortable and confident at the keyboard. In today's workplace, computer skills are an incredibly valuable addition to any employee. Developing and cultivating computer skills can greatly increase your desirability to employers and it can allow you to take on roles and responsibilities you might not have previously considered. Three members of our staff, Crystal, Edna and Brenda, recently participated in computer training courses with Debra Dunbar. They are amazed at how much they've accomplished and their self-confidence in working on computers has grown tremendously. Here's what they had to say about their experience in the training courses:

*I would like to recommend this course to anyone who wants to learn or enhance their computer skills. I started the course in June 2013 and since then my typing skills have greatly improved. I'm learning Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. I'm excited about all the new things I'm learning and looking forward to continuing this process." **Edna Houston***

*I've been training for over 7 months and it's been great learning about computers! When I started training, I didn't know how to turn one on, but now I'm successfully online, checking my email, using GSU ADP, as well as typing. I really could not type before, now I'm very comfortable with the keyboard." **Brenda Cherry***

*The computer training is really helping me! At first, I did not know anything about computers and my typing skills were very poor. I'm now typing 40 wpm, striving for more! I've learned all about Microsoft and Windows 7 as well as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, and I even know a little about Excel. I plan on furthering my education by obtaining a certificate or a degree. Debra is wonderful at what she does and she is very patient and encouraging." **Crystal Walker***

Deborah Dunbar and Edna Houston



Note from the Editor: Would you like to tell us what's happening in your department? Help us celebrate the successes and challenges in Facilities by submitting an article to Karen Stark at kstark@gsu.edu.