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# THE GW STAFF COUNCIL

## *Pillars Newsletter*

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For the final newsletter of the 2023-2024 term, we wanted to highlight the inaugural term and provide an opportunity for our members to reflect on their time with the council.

Additionally, we would like to invite you to read an overview of the 2023-2024 Staff Council successes, challenges, and goals in the 2023-2024 [GW Staff Council President Almanac \(PDF\)](#).

We also hope you will join us for our final meeting on December 20th at 10:00 AM, where we will celebrate this year and install the 2025 council members; you can [register via Zoom](#).

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### Bridget Schwartz, President

As my term as president of the Staff Council comes to an end, I want to take a moment to reflect on what an incredible journey this has been. Serving as the inaugural president of the Staff Council has truly been the honor of my career. Together, we have accomplished so much, and I am deeply grateful for the dedication, resilience, and determination of our officers, elected representatives, and committee members who made this work possible.

This experience has been a powerful reminder of the unwavering commitment GW staff have to our students and to one another. Time and again, I've witnessed the unique voices, the wonderful diversity, and the strong hearts that define this community. It has been inspiring and humbling to see how much we can achieve when we come together with a shared purpose.

At the same time, I recognize there is more work ahead. One of our greatest challenges is breaking down the silos that too often separate us. By working together across departments, divisions, and schools, we can and will build a stronger GW. This is a challenge we must tackle together, and I am confident that the foundation we've built will support us as we move forward.

As I transition to the role of past-president, I remain committed to the vision of a unified staff community working hand-in-hand to make GW a place where every employee feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. Thank you for entrusting me with this role, for your support along the way, and for the passion you bring to making GW an incredible institution.

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### Mindy Galván, Parliamentarian

As someone who is very passionate about issues pertaining to the wellness of staff, I am honored to be a part of GW's inaugural Staff Council. The opportunity to have a council, let alone, accomplish as much as we were able to in our first term, is very special to me. Too often in higher education, staff members are overlooked and voiceless. Having a staff council has been a good step toward changing this narrative. I am so thankful to be a part of an amazing community of staff members and for the opportunity to serve them.

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### Andrea Willis-Johnson, Historian

As Historian, I've had the privilege of capturing our Council's legacy, ensuring that what we've built endures and amplifies the voices of GW staff for years to come. Our legacy lives on through the records we've crafted, and I'm proud to say that, with the Council's presence, many staff members have felt 'heard' as never before. While we faced challenges, as will future councils, there is undeniable power in our collective action. This is clear in Staff Council President Bridget Schwartz's 2023-2024 Almanac, which showcases the transformative impact of our work. Together, GW's staff has the ability to create positive change that resonates across campus and benefits the entire community. I'm confident that our ongoing efforts to improve GW's work environment and collaborate with staff, faculty, students, alumni, and contractors will continue to strengthen our shared sense of purpose and community.

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As I reflect on our inaugural year (+) as the GW Staff Council, I cannot express my gratitude to our leadership and those who took the initiative to create such an important group to represent the staff. I am impressed by all the individuals that have contributed to the outstanding work we did over the last 18 months. However, I know this is just the beginning and the team next year will do even more amazing things. I look forward to staying engaged and to what the future holds. Thank you for allowing me to be part of something so special!

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It has been an honor to serve on the inaugural Staff Council. I have valued the interdepartmental connections and camaraderie among staff. I am proud of the work we've done towards improving transparency at the university and advocating for merit increases and staff benefits. The Council is now and will always be an integral and vital part of GW.

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## Terry Carter, Office of Communications and Marketing Representative

Representing the Office of Communications and Marketing on the inaugural GW Staff Council has been an honor and a privilege. I have had the chance to connect with colleagues across the university and advocate for issues that matter to the office I represent and our broader GW community. Working alongside a dedicated group of individuals who share a commitment to strengthening our university community has been inspiring and rewarding. The inaugural council built a solid foundation that helped move our community forward and make our work stronger. I'm excited to keep the momentum going in our second term and continue contributing to meaningful progress



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