

OSCHE History by Bob Kreienkamp

In 1990 during a regular meeting of Bowling Green State University's Classified Staff Council a discussion on benefits brought a comment from one of the Council members that her cousin was on a similar self-governing body at Wright State University. After discussing the idea of contacting them to get more information on their benefit program I began to wonder how many other state supported universities might have similar self-governing groups like CSC. With the help of the BGSU personal department in getting telephone numbers at all other state universities I began calling around the state and was surprised to find out how many groups there were. Classified Staff Council voted to form an ad-hoc committee to explore the possibility of some kind of connection between all the state-supported Universities and I was named the chair of this committee.



One of the first decisions that we made was that we were only interested in contacting groups that represented non – union employees. We felt that trying to incorporate any employees with union ties could lead to many possible problems on issues. We also affirmed the idea that we would only explore this with state supported institutions and no privately funded colleges. After weeks of making phone calls and explaining what we had in mind we began finding that other universities had similar interest in getting together so we arranged visits to each university to speak at a meeting of their group. Our first visit was to Wright State University followed by visit to Ohio University, Akron, Miami, Ohio State, and Columbus State Community College. The inclusion of community colleges was a decision that was made after deciding that they met all the criteria.

I can't recall everyone who served on the committee (except Megan Shaffer and Kay Guddehus) who would accompany me on the visits to the different campuses during that time but we found a lot of interest among all those groups we contacted. There was some concern among the personal departments at all the institutions, including BGSU, about what our goals for this group would be.

Classified Staff Council decided that the mission of this state wide committee would be to share any information that would benefit every classified staff member both personally and in helping them to better meet the needs of the University and its students. After completing the visits and determining there was sufficient interest in forming a state wide group CSC formulated a plan for the first state wide summer conference and approached the BGSU administration who wholeheartedly supported the idea and provided money to help with expenses of putting on this conference.

In June 1991 the first conference was held on the top floor of Offenhauer West with those 7 institutions sending representatives. One item of business was to officially name the group and confirm its mission statement. Originally the group was formulated to represent classified staff but because Ohio State representatives were from both contract and classified staff we decided to make the name State Employees of Ohio. I was elected the first chairman of SECO and Angie Brookey of Wright State was the first Vice Chair. We determined that across the state we represented 10,500 state employees that we hoped to help. The group decided that each university would name 2 delegates to SECO to attend meetings twice a year and that each university who was participating would host the conference in rotation. The hope of our group was that we would be able to keep it active and strengthen ties between all state institutions. To look back and see that this group is now 18 years old and going strong is something I am very proud of.

Bob Kreienkamp

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