I have had the honor and privilege to serve as the 2016-2017 Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Staff Senate President. Here is an overview of this year’s Staff Senate activities:

1. We began the year with our annual Staff Senate Retreat in Lubbock, Texas. We had the opportunity to meet with the other campus senators and enjoy some face-to-face time (which can be rare). As part of the retreat, we were able to tour CMHC’s John T. Montford Psychiatric and Medical Unit. We enjoyed fellowship at local restaurants, including the Tech Club and participated in a robust strategic planning session, led by Anna Herring, with TTUHSC HR. A special thank you to Allison Kerin and Lyn Russell in helping coordinate the retreat for us.

2. In our next meeting, we followed up with feedback about the retreat. Some of the takeaways from our retreat included having breakfast at the host hotel, all promotional materials available at the retreat, and a map and contact list available prior to the retreat.

3. The Staff Senate hit the ground running, with a concentration on fulfilling ideas and points of interest from the strategic planning session at the retreat. New ad hoc committees were created, including Employee Recognition, Senate Marketing, and Working Together. Along these lines, the campuses reported service efforts, such as donating a television for the Upbring Foster Care Program and a Diabetic 5K Walk. In addition, campuses were busy with new construction and centers, including the SimCentral in Amarillo and Endocrine Diabetes Center in Odessa.

4. December was a busy time for all and we were happy to award our Deck the Halls Winners:

   **Abilene:**
   Sweet Shop
   Simulation Center Front Desk Area
   Submitted by: Terran Keidl, Cristy Martin, Rhonda Cotton and Kris Kimbrell
   Supervisor: Kathryn Whitcomb

   **Amarillo:**
   Gingerbread House
   Harrington Library
   Submitted by: Cindy Harshman, Terri Wilson, Ronetta Mills, Cheryl Simonsen, Yumi Yaguchi
   Supervisor: Cheryl Simonsen

   **Dallas:**
   Reindeer Rx
   School of Pharmacy VA Campus
   Submitted by: Ivelyn Peng and Dr. Crystal Brown.
   Supervisor: Dr. Roland Patry

   **Lubbock:**
   Let It Snow
   Surgery Billing and Coding
   Submitted by: Denise Romo, Josie Uriegas, Liz Lopez, Sandy Ramirez, Darlene Sims, Alex Romo, Marci Cavazos,
   Brenda Lowrie, and Lisa Garza
   Supervisor: Erica Mendez

   **Midland/Odessa:**
   Gingerbread Cubicle
   Business office
   Submitted by: May Moran, Myra Alvarez, Alma Morales, Desiree Phillips, and Roxann Cavazos
   Supervisor: Lynda Nance

Helping others was also still in the air, with activities including Amarillo’s ELF program’s salsa contest and nacho pile to benefit 11 families with 17 children, CMHC’s donation drive to benefit 2 families with 12 children, Odessa’s Kids Christmas event to give out over 115 ornaments, pictures with Santa, and hot cocoa, and Dallas helping their own with Student Services providing cookies and snacks to keep morale and energy. We also gave away 100’s of Texas Tech basketball tickets and were overwhelmed with the interest. A HUGE thank you to the Texas Tech Athletic department for their generosity.
5. We brought in the new year by working on policies and bylaws, including a recommended revision to the TTUHSC bereavement policy, brought to us by one of our TTUHSC employees. There was also construction, construction, construction in Dallas and Lubbock.

6. Work was also done to increase Staff Senate Outreach at the individual campuses and we decided to forego our March meeting to concentrate on these efforts. Some of the efforts included Abilene’s Sweet and Salty Meet and Greet, Odessa’s Community Garden Meet and Greet, Lubbock’s Blood Drive, and CMHC’s Employee Appreciation events. We also worked hard on increasing the employee discounts available to TTUHSC employees at every location. These efforts continued in every campus location throughout our tenure.

7. Employee Recognition and Morale continued to be at the forefront and this included Abilene’s March of Dimes walk, Dallas’ staff potluck, CMHC’s Employee Recognition Birthday board and Appreciation Tree, Lubbock’s Colon Cancer Awareness Month GIANT onsite colon, and Odessa’s Community Garden Adopt a Box program. Efforts continued with each campus’s Employee Recognition Awards and Picnic celebrations.

8. Closing out the year included assisting employees with specific requests shared with their Senator or through the Staff Senate website. It was election time, so many events concentrated on continuing to spread interest to others who may want to serve on the Senate in the future. In addition, many of these events incorporated directly asking staff about feedback about how the Staff Senate can better serve the needs of the campuses. Our Senate Marketing Committee Chair, Norma Rincon, and her committee worked hard to ensure that the Staff Senate had a table and representative at all of the events. We ended with the elections and are super excited for the opportunities and possibilities to come with the new Senate. An ENORMOUS thank you to Allison Kerin and Stephanie Hall for all of their hard work on the elections this year.

The Staff Senate was saddened to hear about the loss of Vicki Cline on August 2nd. She was employed by Texas Tech Health Sciences Center for 17 years, where she was an Assistant to the Chairman of Pediatrics and served as Safety Officer for the SECC and was a Staff Senate Officer. She was active in fundraising for the South Plains Food Bank and organizing all of her department functions. Vicki was also an animal lover and supported the Morris Safety House Pet Rescue through her memorial donations. We were blessed to have known Vicki and will miss her deeply.

As one of our last official acts of business, we were honored to dedicate a Remembrance Tree in the South Plains Food Bank Apple Orchard in Vicki’s memory.

May it continue to bless others many times over just like Vicki did!

Thank you,

Rebecca Ramirez
Staff Senate President 2016-2017