

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY™

## Professional and Scientific Council

### FY 2022 Salary Statement on Behalf of Professional & Scientific Staff at Iowa State University Sara Parris, President, Professional & Scientific Council

As the representative of over 3,000 Professional and Scientific Employees of Iowa State University, I would like to thank the Iowa Board of Regents for the opportunity to submit the following comments for inclusion in the April 2021 virtual meeting minutes.

In preparation for my statement today, I reviewed the salary policy statements from the previous five council presidents. What I found was disheartening. Our presidents have stood before you year after year and pleaded for meaningful, performance-based increases that reflect the value that Professional and Scientific employees bring to Iowa State University.

This feels like an exercise in futility. To P&S employees, it appears that our contributions as the University's largest employee group are not valued. What other possible explanation is there to give a P&S employee hired within the last five years who has literally never seen a meaningful raise during their employment here? Or why, after decades of requests, the University still lacks the will to implement a performance-based increase plan to reward and retain high performers? No one can deny that our state universities are facing an economic downturn, and during times of financial hardship, we all must step up and do more with less. Performance-based increase plans embody that spirit; P&S staff have and always will work hard, but it is beyond time to have that hard work recognized, fairly compensated, and rewarded.

Every year, the P&S Council President uses this time to highlight the accomplishments of Professional and Scientific staff and to remind you of what this group of professionals brings to Iowa State University. In 2018, President Jessica Bell told you that "P&S is the Heart and Soul of this organization. We keep the oxygen, blood and electrical impulses moving along to make the whole thing work." She was right, and that has never been more evident than in this past year.

Carrying out the University's mission to create, share, and apply knowledge to make Iowa and the world a better place in the midst of a global pandemic is no easy feat—but we did it. Across campus, there is so much pride in the fact that we were able to provide a residential experience for those students who wanted it, were able to adapt to hybrid and online models for those who felt safer off campus, that the Cyclones Care measures were taken so seriously and were so successful in slowing the spread, and that research, innovation, and outreach could continue. None of this would have been possible without the tireless devotion of Professional and Scientific staff:

- The doctors, nurses, and public health staff who came to campus every day and risked exposure to the virus to diagnose, treat, and advise not only students but the entire campus;
- The Emergency Operations Center and Incident Management team who have been activated for over a year and worked months on end with no days off;
- The IT staff who had two weeks to figure out how to make both online learning and working from home a reality for everyone—and succeeded;
- The CELT staff who put in 18-hour days to support faculty in the transition to online coursework;

- The Extension and Outreach offices who adapted their programming to still meet the needs of Iowans in all 99 counties;
- The staff who had to create new workflows to respond to the global shutdown and take action to cancel and refund the countless flights, hotels, and arrangements for university-sponsored travel that had been made, including study abroad trips, campus visitors, and employees who had planned to travel to present or attend professional conferences;
- The staff at the Veterinary Diagnostic Lab who have run tens of thousands of covid tests for the state with a rapid turnaround that allows for effective contact tracing to take place;
- The Residence staff who literally worked around the clock to help students get settled in to isolation and quarantine housing;
- The Academic Advisors who have patiently guided their students and helped them stay on track in a year when nothing was typical;
- The Procurement staff who ensured campus had adequate amounts of scarce resources, such as PPE, hand sanitizer, and cleaning products.

All across campus, I see a year of personal and professional accomplishments, and a perseverance we didn't know was possible; we gave everything we had and then some. While President Wintersteen and other Senior Leaders have been very generous in their praise for the work being done by Professional and Scientific staff, pats on the back do not pay our bills, nor our increased health insurance costs, nor make up for lost retirement contributions. As infections wane, vaccines are distributed, and we near the finish line, we are greeted with more budget cuts, no revision to HR policy that allows for performance-based increases, no plans for meaningful raises, inadequate student fee increases that fall far short of departmental needs and requests, and open hostility from the state legislature.

This year, Professional and Scientific staff at Iowa State University had the courage to do what was necessary and right to serve our students, our communities, and our state. Do you have the courage to do what is necessary and right for the Professional and Scientific employees of Iowa State University?