

133. Ashley Osborne: Practical Effects

Gavin Kelly

Hey, everybody you're listening to Beyond 1894 this is the official podcast of Louisiana Tech University. My name is Gavin Kelly from the Office of University Communications, and our guest for this episode is Ashley Osborne. She is a project based learning specialist, and we will ask her what that means here in a minute. Ashley, thanks for making time to join us today. So we ask everybody who comes on sort of talk about their tech journey, which, for some people, dates back, you know, a year or two. For some people, it's their whole lives. Talk to us about kind of the beginnings of your quote, unquote, tech journey.

Ashley Osborne

Sure. So I'm a legacy, both my parents, both my parents. I'm talking about my dad's got two bricks. So it was kind of always part of my family story. My parents met here, you know, so we're very strongly from here, also, or just from closing, no, they're not from here. They're they were both born and raised in South Louisiana, okay? And so they both had come here for different reasons, and then they met here, and yeah, here I am, so and then so my dad was in the Air Force. He was military. We moved around a lot. And so there were certain places that we just always kind of came back to to visit. And we didn't physically come back to Ruston as much, but we would talk about it a lot. Some of my dad's best friends came from tech, people that I call uncle, even though I'm not related to them. I've got several of those that are college friends. And so in as I'm the oldest of four, and as we were getting to where we're looking at colleges, I actually wound up at the University of New Orleans for my bachelor's degree. And in the back of my head, I always wanted to come to tech. Yeah, my brother came to tech, and I just saw how much fun he was having, and I wanted the college experience, so I came here for my master's degree in history, graduated with that in 2014 worked at a company here in town for a few years, and then found this job.

Gavin Kelly

So I'm guessing with your legacy parents, I mean, it sounds like obviously, because you were at a different university for a while, that they were understanding. They were understanding about your academic choices, they let you do that on your own, but did they try to push tech on you? And was that something that you decided that something else was a better alternative? Or How'd that work out for sure?

Ashley Osborne

So at the time, we were living in Covington, and so it was close to home, within an hour, but I also my ACT score got me a full ride to you. And oh, got Yeah, gotcha. And I wanted to the program that I wanted was there and it wasn't. It's not here at Tech. And so that was kind of the main factors, where it was closer to home. It was a full ride scholarship. It was the program I wanted. And quite honestly, it was in New Orleans. And I just really loved New Orleans, and having been there for college and watched it as an adult, I mean, I'm not sure that that would be the place I would want to settle down, but

living there as a college student, fantastic. I'm sure. Yeah, I loved it. What was your undergraduate degree in my undergraduate degree was in film. I wanted to be a critique person, critic, screenwriter. And, you know, we've all seen that's a terrible career field, so I just never, never wound up going.

Gavin Kelly

When did those, those interests start to form for you, like, at what point in your junior high, high school, when did you decide that that was gonna be something you wanted

Ashley Osborne

to try to pursue? Honestly, film has always been a big part of my life. It's kind of shaped my personality in a lot of ways. I was a Disney kid, and, like, Indiana Jones was my absolute favorite as a kid, and so growing up with these stories that adapted history parts and adapted, you know, parts of mythology and and folklore, that was really just, it's just always been a big part of my life. And as I was kind of, you know, every girl goes through, it seems like every girl goes through a horse phase, and we all go through a marine biologist phase, and we all go through an interior designer phase. And I went through all of those. And kind of just, I don't know, like I toured uno, and I had, at the time that was in 2006 and 2007 and at the time, film was really big in Louisiana, and so it looked like there was going to be some opportunity here, right here, in home. So it kind of was one of those things that was just like a little seed as a kid. And then as I got older, I was like, Oh, maybe I could do this as a job. And then I graduated, said I can't do that as a job. I need, I need money. And so it just, it has never really panned out in the back of my head. It's still there. I kind of, you know, I watched, I watched movies, and still find myself critiquing them in the back of my head. And so I don't know that might wind up being something in the future. And that was part of what. I came here to tech for a history degree, partly because I needed a degree that would justify me coming to Tech because I just wanted to be a tech Yeah, but also the history part of it, and I did my best to focus on film history while I was here, which is surprisingly difficult. There's not a whole lot of scholarly research yet that's been done on that. Not a whole lot, at least not at the time. And so that might be something that I'm able to do in the future, especially because Louisiana now has a long heritage of film. Yes, that has happened here in this part of the state, North Louisiana. Exactly one of my projects was on the impact of Steel Magnolias and academic Yeah, because that was around the 30 year mark, 35 years, whatever it was. And so that was cool to get to go talk to people who remembered being there during the filming. Knew the author, knew his sister like the whole nine yards. So that might be something that I'm able to go back to, but I don't know,

Gavin Kelly

yeah, can I hang on to it? Because it sounds fun that this is, I'll put you on the spot here. Are you familiar with this is not a sponsored segment, by the way, but are you familiar with Letterboxd? When they they get people on the red carpet, they get these actors, and they make them talk about their four favorite films. Yes, I'm gonna make you do that right now. Oh boy, I told you I was gonna put you on the spot. And I know we're trying. It's like asking people their favorite songs, their favorite movies, anything like that. It changes depending on the day. I know. If I ask you this tomorrow, a week from now, you'll have different answers every time, but right here, right now, in this conversation, talk to me about your four favorite movies of all time.

Ashley Osborne

Oh boy, of all time. So obviously, Disney, I've already mentioned that, and that's a big part of my life, probably one of my top favorite Disney movies. I really love Finding Nemo. Like, I just, I love it. Yes, used, used one of the music pieces in my wedding. Like, I mean, Finding Nemo has always been a really sweet time for me. I remember seeing it in theaters. I saw it. I saw it when it first came out. I was like, 14, so I saw it when it first came out, and then I saw it again quite a bit after that, when they were doing that, re-releasing everything in thing, and it was just, it's just incredible, like, I'll watch it a couple times a year. So I really love that one today, that I would say that's my favorite one. Okay, yes, I back to Indiana Jones Raiders of the Lost Ark, of course, is just, I've, I've studied that film. I've looked at the story behind it, and the the way that Spielberg did everything, the way that, you know, Harrison Ford was becoming very famous at that time, and how that was a huge part of it, Lucas Film and how they were part of it, Disney's part in that, like, just all of that. So I love that one. We're, we're getting kind of into spooky season, and so one of my absolute favorite Halloween ish spooky movies is Young Frankenstein. Okay, I love that. That's my favorite Mel Brooks movie. There's just something. And I've got a lot of friends, we'll watch it. My husband and I do a movie night once a month at our house, and that will usually be one of the movies we watch. And I've got friends that don't like that movie, and they're like, why do we watch this movie? It's so silly, because it's just crazy. Yeah, I just, I adore that one. Man, what would be my fourth one right now? I so the Reston community theater does plug for them. They do several shows during the year, and this last year, their junior version, so performers under the age of 18 did singing in the rain, and that is probably my favorite musical, yeah. Okay, so I really love, like, the Gene Kelly, like all of that, I just, I really do love that one. So today, those would probably be my favorite.

Gavin Kelly

Well, thanks for that. I enjoyed talking about film with you there for a second. I'm just, we're circled back to Indiana Jones, because that's obviously a very long storied history of that franchise. I mean, he's as a couple years ago, he was still doing it right here. So Raiders of the Lost Ark, that's your favorite because it's the first one, because it's the founding or because you genuinely think that's the best one. Like, what about Raiders is your favorite? Because I've always been a Last Crusade.

Ashley Osborne

That is a very clear second. That is a very, very close second. I mean, Sean Connery is just magic. Yeah. I think, I think raiders in, in some sense it is because it's the first one, and so it's kind of the introduction to this character. Oh yes, I I saw it as, I think I was probably eight or nine, which is crazy that my parents would watch that and I didn't have nightmares about it. But that that also started my love affair with Steven Spielberg movies. But I think, I think it's because I saw it as a kid, and I watched it so much, and just the feel of it, and Harrison Ford's just magic, and Karen Allen is just wonderful. And so I think that there's just something really magical about it. There's some movies that are like that. They just. Just stick with you when you see them. You're, you know, you're watching something really special that that may or may not ever happen again in the same way. And so, I mean, all of the Indiana Jones films, with one exception, are just really special. And they, they all have a really great character development and really great like the practical effects in those original trilogy are just beautiful. Oh my gosh, the innovation of and I'm a total film nerd in that I love practical effects. And to me, the effects that they used, there were so many of them in Raiders, that it just makes it really fun to watch, and it has aged beautifully as a film. That's what

Gavin Kelly

practical effects can do for you. It can make the movie timeless. You know, yes, and I think, you know, I didn't expect to be talking about movies with you this much, but I'm enjoying it, I think, in this era of a lot of films, deciding, well, we can CGI anything. So let's CGI everything. Let's record the whole movie on a blue screen, whatever. Not even put real costumes, right, right? Yeah. Not only can you tell, as a casual viewer when you're watching it, but like, what's it gonna look like in 10 years when the effects have changed and the standards of change, whatever, you know, just something to think, not us think about, but like, you know, it's just something to notice and consider. And you talk about having sort of, like, nostalgic ties to these franchises in these movies that sort of bolster your feelings for them. You know, I totally get that fellow about James Bond. You know, I was like, five, six years old, way too young to be watching James Bond movies. But watch, you probably watch that 24 hour marathon on TV, sure, sure, all that, and just been a big fan ever since. And it's like the character and the setting and the stories that become important to you as a viewer. You know, it means something when you watch the next one and, you know, so that's right, I totally get it. Very interesting. I did not know that about you, so that was a good conversation. I enjoyed that. Let's talk about you here. Now your role here. So project based, learning specialist, you're gonna have to describe what that means and kind of what the nature of your job is. Your job is, have you, is that the role you've been in here the whole time, or did you start out as something else, and it kind of morphed into that?

Ashley Osborne

Sure. So when I was here as a grad student, obviously I was a grad student here, and so I worked in the Department of History. I helped several faculty members during their classes. I just kind of, in general, was helping at the time, History and Social Sciences were still separated. And so I was, I would work in the office, um, like, just kind of in general help. And then after I, after I graduated, like I said, I left and worked for a local company for a few years, doing kind of just odd jobs for them. And so when I was looking to leave that position, it just was time I knew somebody here through a family member connection, okay? And then that person told me that they were looking for a person to fill a new position in his department, and it was project based learning. So it has been the same title. I started that in 2017 and so I'm now starting my ninth year, yeah. And so it's been that title the whole time, but in the years since I started, we've expanded from doing just a few classes. So I guess that maybe I need to back up and say what it is, sure. Okay, so project based learning was started here in the kind of like early 2000s Dr David Hall was a huge pioneer of that program, and he had a lot of support at the time to develop this new curriculum. There were other ideas from other universities, and he could tell you the whole story, if you're interested in hearing all of that, but it really is kind of a revolutionary way to think about engineering education, and so it's, it's instead of just students doing homework problems and doing book work and sitting through lectures, it is giving them literal tools and parts and pieces to be able to build a project. So in the first year of the engineering curriculum here, all the students take the same class no matter what their concentration is, with only just a few exceptions. And so they're all in the same classes together in fall, winter and spring. And in each one of those classes, there's two projects that the students do. So day one of first day of engineering class, hi, welcome. I'm your instructor. Go to the Project Based Learning office and pick up your toolkit, and we give them a tool bag with screwdrivers and pliers and a dial caliper, multimeter, et cetera. And then we also give them a bag that has a bunch of little electronic pieces in it. And what they do in that first half of

their first quarter, which all of them are working on it right now, they are building a robot that is fully programmable with a microcontroller on board. And all of those parts and pieces that they get for those projects come through my office. So my office services probably about 700 students in the first three or four days of class every fall, and then they'll come to us if they have something breaks and they need to get a replace. Management. We run kind of a storefront through our office. I also help with the management of multiple class spaces, which our classrooms are kind of a lecture lab combination. And so there's a lot of tools in there. There's things like soldering stations and drill presses and hand tools and drill bits and things like that. And so I am part of that management team to make sure that those pieces stay operational, that they stay usable, that students are staying safe. And then we have a bank of 3d printers and a laser cutter, and so I'm part of that as well. So all of that kind of is wrapped up in project based learning. And so since I've started in 2017 we've expanded from doing just five or six classes to now, I think we do over nearly 30 in an entire year. So we service about half of the student body of the College of Engineering and Science in any any quarter. And so there's 1000s of screws and 1000s of pieces of wire. So it's, it's, it's quite an ordeal. It's a big team that we have over there. Dr Hall is still involved, but we also have Dr will long. Dr crystal crews is a huge part of that, and we're bringing more and more faculty in as they expand the vision of project based learning to include new forms of engineering education. So it's really fun to be at the part the forefront of all of that. Yeah, and my, my position is kind of halfway faculty and staff focused, and most it's mostly student focused, and that's really where my passion is.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah, everyone who comes on here and talks about having any kind of role that involves working with students, and talks about how rewarding it is, and that's, I mean, that's why we're all here, in a way, right? So let me ask you this as somebody without an engineering background, and I don't mean that as a slight. I mean that is like, I'm impressed, you know, because, yes, I mean, you've certainly cut your teeth on you rather be like you said your ninth year of it. So what has it been like, kind of learning some ins and outs of engineering as a discipline, without coming in with any of that in your background?

Ashley Osborne

Yeah. So I, a lot of my best friends are engineers. I am married to an engineer, so I'm just around them all. And so in a way, I can't catch a break. Where are my liberal arts people at? And so in a lot of ways, it has been kind of trial by fire. And the first day that I walked in, I had no idea what a multimeter was. Did not know what that was. I had never touched an Arduino microcontroller before. I had some computer experience. I had a little bit of coding shout out to MySpace, high school days, and so I had a little bit of an understanding of that kind of stuff. But what I've had to learn, I've really had to learn on the fly. And there are still multiple times that a student will come with, hey, I need I had this question about something, and I have to kind of go, Oh, I'm not really sure. Let's figure that out. Learning how to do an effective internet search is probably one of the best life skills, learning how to find the information that you need. You don't have to know everything, but learning how to find it. And I tell students that my student workers in particular, because they come up against those questions as well where a student needs help, and they're the ones standing there and the students asking them the question. And I tell them the most important skill is honestly, knowing how to find that information. So there have been definite times where I go, I don't know, I'm so sorry, and I have to find that out for people. But it really, I mean, you're gonna, you're gonna run into that anytime, of course, where there's gonna be things,

you're gonna hit the edge of your experience and go, Oh my goodness. Okay, that's new, and how you respond to that really kind of shows your development as far as a lifelong learner. And so my mom was really good at instilling that in me. I was a homeschool kid, so having that lifelong learning desire was really that's a huge part of my personality, and so I think that has helped me a lot in what I do here, because I have to learn. I mean, I'm constantly learning new things. That's part of the fun of it, that's part of the fulfillment of it, that could also be very frustrating. And, you know, you go home at the end of the day go, oh my goodness, what have I done today? I don't know. I was helping students all day. So sometimes it can get to where you have to remind yourself that this is what you're doing, or you're doing right now, and this is the important part. But in general, it it tends to be a very rewarding, challenging every day is different type experience.

Gavin Kelly

Well, we talk we're talking here about kind of the student focused part of your job. I think this is a good moment to sort of transition you mentioned serving faculty and staff. We're going to talk about kind of the newest way that you've been doing, that you and I both for the last were you at the end of your three years. So faculty, staff, Senate, as it was formerly called, University Senate, combined, faculty and staff. Staff here at the university. And I don't think it's, you know, rude to say that it was a little lopsided in terms of the balance of faculty and staff. I think it was like 39 to nine or something like that. It was a four to one ratio faculty of staff. So it came out about recently that there was going to be a split. There's going to be a university faculty senate, university staff senate, and that was a tricky thing to get off the ground with the group that was already in place, because you've got a bunch of faculty that can contribute to getting the Faculty Senate, getting their wheels rolling, but then nine staff members that have to kind of figure out, we got to make a constitution, and we got to figure out how we're going to get new members in. And at a moment like that, you need somebody to kind of step up and take point. And I think you did that. So I want you to talk about not only what that's been like, but why that was something you felt inclined to kind of take a leadership stance on. I mean, you are currently technically the staff senate president. Is that correct transition? Yes, yeah. So yeah, why it was that was something that you felt like taking on, and what that process has been like for you, sure.

Ashley Osborne

So in some ways, when there is a call for volunteers, there's always that awkward moment where everybody's kind of looking around, going, okay, and I am usually happy to let that ride for a minute and be like, Okay, well, fine, if nobody else will do it, then I'll do it. And that was literally exactly how it happened. So probably, probably about a year ago was where we first started hearing that we got a new vice president, new president in the fact in the University Senate. And they came pretty, almost like their first meeting. Yeah, they came in and said, Hey, we've got a new higher administration, upper administration here at the university, the President's coming in with all these new ideas, and he would like us to look at possibly doing this. And so at first, at first, I was against it, I'll be honest, because there is, there seems to be this emotion around so many things here at the university, where faculty are provided space to speak on things. They're provided the the platform that they need if they need to make a change or if they need to give provide feedback on things or be part of a change, of a decision. And staff in general do not seem to have the same platform. Yeah, as much as much they're just not. That's just the way that it's set up. And I think that's probably true for most universities. And so staff I had, I had a friend tell me that faculty are like, you know, the the wheels on the car and the drive that,

you know all this, they're the they're the pretty stuff, but you lift up the hood of the car, that's the staff. They get things going. Not that faculty are not important, because they definitely are. I mean, you need that to run the car, but staff is kind of the unsung heroes, and in a lot of ways, they just don't have the same opportunities. And that's not a slide on anybody. That's just the way that it is. And so at first, I was honestly kind of against and I'm the loud mouth. I'll always raise my hand during a question, during a you know, somebody says, any questions, I'll be the one to raise my hand to say something. And so I was part of that first few meetings. I don't remember if you were in those first few that we had, where basically the new vice president and president of the staff of the University Senate sat us down and said, Hey, here's kind of what we're thinking. What are your concerns? And that was my primary concern, was, I don't want to see staff sidelined more than a voice. Lose a voice is a better way to put it. I don't want to see the staff lose their voice, because we don't have much and there's a lot of us here. And so things that affect faculty, quite a bit of that will also affect staff. And so I feel like we need to have some kind of participation. There some kind of officially recognized feedback mechanism. And for a very long time, the University Senate was kind of our only way to do that. As flawed as it was for staff on our side, like you were saying it was it was lopsided, I think is a good word for many different reasons. It was that way for a long time. And so there were some things that it was like, Okay, well, that might have been better to only be a faculty thing, or Okay, staff probably needed to have that conversation, and we just didn't have the space for that in the University Senate. But again, I was kind of like, this is the only thing that we have. And the more that we had those conversations, the more that I personally talked with the University Senate vice president, President, the more that I was thinking about it, the more I was looking at the way the university is structured. It seems to me that there was a really big opportunity here, that it sounded like the University Senate split was going to happen. And so then it was like, oh. Okay, well, that could be a good thing. How can it be a good thing? So immediately starting to look at, okay, well, what can, how can we shift this to better serve what staff need? And in at the end of the day, we came up with, Okay, well, this is kind of the structure you mentioned, the Constitution. So the University Senate had a constitution. It was part of university policy for whatever reason. That was a decision way back when, and that was one thing that we kind of had to wrestle with, was what happens now? Because the faculty are going to want to do their thing their way, and staff are going to want to do their thing their way. There were large groups of people that were identified, that were not represented well, or they did not have the enfranchisement in the Senate to be able to vote on things, to be able to have the feedback. And so I think that taking this one combined entity, which we found out was unique tech, was the only one really in our region that had that that we could find information on. We were really the only one that was a combined taking that, and instead of having that one combined body, having these two specific ones that had a little bit more of a narrow focus, but also opened up these doors for all of these other people to be able to serve and be part of this conversation. I think that in the long run, it's going to be a really good thing. I think that it's going to provide much more focused, concentrated feedback and participation, because at the end of the day, we all want the same things. Faculty is is different from staff, but at the end of the day, we all want the same things. We want, a safe, healthy place to work that is going to provide compensation for what we need for the rest of our, you know, our personal lives that we're going to be able to leave at the end of the day feel fulfilled. I did something. I'm part of something. I'm I'm not wasting my time. I have a purpose to be here. I think at the end of the day, we all want that, and having that opportunity to mold that and to shape that is really exciting. It really is, because not every university has a Staff Senate. So to have that opportunity in the first place, in in the short run, it's creating a lot of okay, well, we have to figure this

out. We have to build this structure. We have to ask that question. But in the long run, I think it assuming that everything works out the way that we hope it will, and we get the participation, and we get the the recognition from the administration, we get the recognition from other people here on campus, assuming that that all works out, I think this really could be a great opportunity for staff to feel more invested, more valued, and like we have a better voice.

Gavin Kelly

And it's like you said, you know, you had your concerns early on, but I think it was, it didn't take long to see that this is the recommendation. The idea for the split came from a place of good faith. You know, it's not, wasn't about, well, let's get all these staff out of our Senate and put them in their own thing and sideline, you know. So, like you said, I think it's administration. I think it's our current, previous combined Senate leadership. You know, everybody has good intentions so well, and I'm, I was in, you know, several of those early meetings, especially because, you know, you get to a point where you're like, Well, we're doing the split, so we need to get some staff together to talk about, like, constitution and this and that. Well, there's only what, nine of us. So we kind of all had to get involved with faculty. It's like, well, who wants to be we need, you know, five to 10 y'all to get together and but for staff, it's like, well, all of the staff on the Senate need to get together because we need and we need everyone all hands. So yeah, those early meetings about, well, what does the Constitution need to look like? How are we going to decide what areas of campus can be represented and how many members and blah, blah? And it's a lot of like laying the groundwork for something that doesn't exist, which is strange, but again, like I said, You need somebody to kind of take point who can clearly feels very strongly about doing it right and doing it well. So I'll say now that I'm very appreciative that you took the lead on that. And I think it's the the new staff senate is going to be in a better place for it. So do you have plans to I mean, I guess you don't have to say this here. You don't say it now, but when the time comes for a non transitional, fully fledged staff president, you know, throw your your hat in the ring.

Ashley Osborne

I have a sinking feeling that it's going to be the same. Does anybody else want to do this? Fine. If no one else wants to, I will. Because, I mean, as we mentioned before, I was, I was done. Man, I was almost done. I was at the end of my term. The term for University Senate was three years, and I had just completed year three. I was like, I'm done, I'm good, and then I'm getting pulled right back into it in a much larger role. So I think it may wind up being that, which is that's how I can best serve the staff here. I mean, I feel strongly about it and and I. Recognize that it's not going to be easy at first, and it's going to be a little bit of trying to we've, we've had to do, we've been calling it marketing. We've been having to really market. What's the purpose here of staff

Gavin Kelly

new? So, yeah, it's brand new, yeah, informing people that it's exists now

Ashley Osborne

exactly, and it's, it's not inferior to the other one. You know, it's not like, oh, well, now faculty doing their own thing, and staff just left behind. No, it's not because we have this, this and this. So my transitional team has been great. We've been serving since early May. And so that's Kaylee Messina and Edward Thiel and Marcia Smith. And so the four of us have really had to do some heavy lifting of thinking

through, kind of like, what's our identity as steps in it, what are our goals, what's our vision, what is this going to look like? Who is enfranchised? Who is, you know, is there anybody who's not enfranchised, and for what reason? And so we've kind of had to go back to that we're on, I think, like draft seven or eight of the Constitution at this point, because when you think, Oh, well, we'll do it this way, and then you start doing it, and you go, Oh, that's not working out at all. We need to change that. I think that having a good team of people like them, they've been just wonderful in this whole process, and we've all, all four of us have worked really, really well together. I'm hoping that we'll be able to come out with more information on what are the meetings looking like, what is the membership look like? Like you said, we're still very much doing that, and this is all volunteer, right? Like this is in addition to what we're doing in our full time jobs. And everybody knows fall quarter is just a marathon, yeah? Like you start at Labor Day, and you go till Thanksgiving, and there's no break, and so we're doing this on top of our regular job. And so I don't, I don't think that people, I think that there's, there's people in two camps. They think that either the Senate is this huge burden and it's, oh my gosh, there's so much work I don't really feel like doing that. I don't have time. Or they think, well, what's the point? They're just goofing around. And, you know, waste of time. Waste of time, exactly. And that's what we're trying to help people see, well, you could treat it that way, or you can come be part of the group that's trying to make things better. It doesn't

Gavin Kelly

have to be those, one of those two extremes, either. It has to be a huge time suck, and it's enough to be a waste of time. You know that's right. Be what you make it exactly.

Ashley Osborne

And I think that that's what we're trying to market, what we're trying to get across, what we're trying to tell people. And I mean, we're bringing in groups that have never been part of right leadership at the university, like they've for whatever reason, they've just never had that, that that avenue to be able to speak into it. And so we're trying to also get them involved. Say, Hey, look, you're a big part of this university. You've got 35 people in your department that are all full time staff. These things affect you. And we want you to be here. We want you to be involved. And so trying to get people and, I mean, we're we're even working on which the the University Senate started on this we're working on getting into, hopefully, university policy that service in Senate is a protected use of your time, right, where you don't have to, oh, I have to use PTO to do it, or I have to clear it with whoever to clear it with somebody you know more than just, hey, I'm gonna be out of the office. But like, Oh, can I have permission? Can I have to make up this time somewhere, yellow tape, the red tape, whatever you're exactly. So we're trying really hard to identify and remove those obstacles to service that people might have of, oh, it's going to take up too much time well, but that time is protected because you don't have to take PTO to do it. And so I think that, I think that in a lot of ways, that's kind of the uphill battle that we're fighting, that we're fighting right now. And just getting people to see, just being, getting visibility on this has been a big deal too. I mean, I was talking to somebody recently about something and say, Hey, can staff senate be involved in that? Can we be I mean, we're supposed to be treated equally to faculty senate in some ways, not every way, because there is, there's a certain term that only applies to Faculty Senate, but Staff Senate also, we want to at least be in the room. And this person said, Oh, I had no idea that that had happened already. I didn't know that that's what was going on. Like, Well, okay, I guess that. I thought everybody knew about it by now, but I guess not. So this is, this is also helpful to be able to

come on to like the podcast and talk about it, just to get people to see like we like you. I think, I think you hit it on the head. People have good intentions, but at the end of the day, if you're not doing anything, you know it's just going to stay as intentions. It's just going to stay as Oh, we hope you do well, bye. Oh, well, good luck. I'm not doing anything in that, but good luck. And we're trying to get over that obstacle that people might have. There's always going to be people that just won't be interested, and that's okay. We're still going to represent them. We're still going to do our best to make things better for everybody. So. Uh, there's going to be some things that come up that are specific to faculty that the staff senate hopefully will be able to say no. Like, this doesn't really affect staff directly, but it kind of does, because it affects faculty, and that affects everybody, yeah. So we're hoping that we can, and we're hoping that that will go the other way too, things that affect staff but not faculty, that the faculty senate would come behind us and support us say, No, like this is an employee situation, not faculty staff. Like this is for everybody. And so we want to try to create an environment where everybody is benefited by this, or as many people as possible, or at the very least, that as many people as possible know the changes and they can prepare for it, and they can adapt and adjust. So we just really want to just be part of the conversation and to have that feedback that is recognized. Of, okay, this is the, you know, quote, unquote, unified staff, that they're all in agreement on this thing, and, Oh, also, faculty is supporting them in that as well. That's kind of the dream, is that we would be able to get to that point where we're able to make a difference.

Gavin Kelly

Yeah, well, I think you're on the way. I appreciate your insight into that. Thanks for that, and thanks for your hard work. Again, I said it already, but your hard work and all the effort you're putting into it, because, like you said, it's on top of job, full time jobs already. So it's volunteer work, and every good volunteer is kind of a in a thankless position in a lot of ways. So thanks for that, and I again appreciate you making time for us here today. I know, like you said, fall quarter is really busy, and especially we're only in the I guess, like third, maybe second, third. Yeah. Okay, so yeah, like, we got midterms next week, still kind of ramping up, but so everyone I've talked to, every podcast guests we've had over the last few weeks, it's kind of been like, Well, I appreciate you fit and being able to fit us into your busy schedule, not ironically, like genuinely, thank you. But so actually, it was good getting to know your day, talking movies with you a little bit. That was fun. So thanks for being on the podcast, and good luck. We appreciate it. Thank you so much. Go Dogs. Go Dogs.

Gavin Kelly

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