Notes from Charles Kennedy

In the recent 100th anniversary meeting of the Association of Physical Plant Administrators, one of the keynote speakers addressed universities and their surroundings.

Many universities established in the 19th and 20th centuries began with just a few buildings. With these intellectual centers as the hub of economic, industrial and technological innovation, cities developed around the universities. Indeed, campuses across the country often served as the destination and focal point of their respective regions.

The University of Washington is one of the most visited places in all of Seattle, alongside being the city's number one employer and the state's largest educational institution. So it’s no surprise to you that we serve as a focal point for Seattle, the Puget Sound region and the entire state of Washington.

This resonates with one of our new Facilities Services goals – to provide quality places and spaces. Our beautiful campus provides students, faculty and staff with an environment that supports boundless ingenuity and passion.

Recently FS received a letter from a traveling faculty member about our beautiful campus:

*I didn't know that the UW campus has been cited as one of the most beautiful and inviting campus landscapes in the country until I visited your website. But, that comes as no surprise, as I have been visiting the real deal.*

*In my almost two years here, I have marveled at the beauty of this campus—every nook and cranny: the young and aging trees, the high and low shrubbery, the variety of flowers, the lawns, even the clean lines of the wood chip beds. From the quasi-formal to the quasi-wild, it is simply gorgeous. Especially so in spring, but I love it in all seasons. As my appointment is coming to an end, this is a much belated compliment to you and your crews.*

*We know all too well how the landscaping often suffers on public sites when the public purse is not generous. You have done wonders, and I thank you profoundly for the contribution you make to this great institution.*

Newsletter redesign underway

As you’ve probably noticed, we’ve changed our newsletter. It’s your work that keeps this department running, and it’s your stories that should compose this newsletter. Inside you can find a slew of stories fine-tuned to better represent you.

While we’re at it, we should mention the redesign. We’re hoping to make this newsletter a little more graphics-focused and include a bit more multimedia content. On the back end we’ll look at how many people open our emails and read through, and send out a few surveys. In the coming months we’ll try new designs and distribution methods, so don’t panic if November looks totally different than this month's newsletter and it comes to you in a different format than before.

If you have an idea for content for this newsletter, please don’t hesitate to contact Editor Alicia Halberg at halbergx@uw.edu or 206-221-4351, or Adviser Donna Schmidt at donnas@uw.edu or 206-221-4340. They’re here to help promote you and make this newsletter an all-inclusive publication for FS staff.

+events

Beginning Excel  
Tuesdays in October  
10 to 11 a.m.  
FS Training Center  
http://goo.gl/cMP1Ew

AiM Drop-In Sessions  
Wednesdays in October  
9 to 10 a.m.  
FS Training Center  
http://goo.gl/GANHRH

Practical leadership course series:  
Confidence in the contract  
Thursday, Oct. 16  
10 a.m. to noon  
FS Training Center  
http://goo.gl/L1rrxp

Safety: it’s more than PPE  
Thursday, Nov. 6  
10 a.m. to noon  
FS Training Center  
http://goo.gl/UmHxMf

Siri McLean: All of us at UWEM wear many hats, but my official title is plans and training manager. My big project right now is the UW's All-Hazards Emergency Management Plan 2014 update. This is the UW's all-inclusive emergency planning document, and it's updated every two years.

I also do a lot of outreach and education on campus regarding emergency preparedness. I consult a variety of departments and teach classes. When the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated I serve as the planning section chief. I also help train all new EOC responders so that they know what to do when it's activated.

I've also worked on our emergency exercises since receiving my master exercise practitioner accreditation from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Emergency exercises are important because emergencies don't happen every day! I've found these exercises to be like writing a play; each person in the EOC has their part to play, and each department reacts differently.

FSEM: How did you get into the emergency management field of work?

SM: In my undergrad I studied speech communications because I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do, but I figured I needed to be able to present and speak well. After graduating in 2000, I started at an accounting firm. The following year we had both the Nisqually Earthquake and 9/11. Like many businesses the firm began emergency planning, and I became the safety programmer.

A few years later, the UW created a new graduate program: Strategic Planning for Critical Infrastructure and I enrolled again at the UW. During my graduate studies I was a student volunteer for the Partners in Emergency Preparedness conference, and through that I connected with UWEM Director Steve Charvat.

After graduation I worked at Microsoft, but became frustrated with how slowly things moved in the private sector. Luckily, Steve got in touch about a position opening up at UWEM. As a UW graduate, I was excited for the opportunity to return to my alma mater and serve the UW in a different capacity.

I love this field because everyone is so caring and welcoming. People tend to enter this field because they care about others and plan ahead. Partnerships are really important in emergency management because you want to call someone you know in an emergency, not a stranger. I love helping people, and so do those around me.
**Siri McLean, cont’d**

**FSEM: Outside of work, what are some of your interests?**

**SM:** I love sunshine, the Northwest and camping. Preparedness and camping really go hand-in-hand. I just pack up my truck with gear and head out. Recently I took a trip to the Washington coast in the Graylands area. I just loved how beautiful it was out there; there’s really nothing better than being outdoors.

I really enjoy spending time with my family, especially my mom and grandma. My grandma recently relocated to the area, so we’ve been spending more time together. When I’m not outside or with my family, you can find me with a nice glass of wine! I live in the Kirkland/Woodinville area where there are more than 150 tasting rooms.

About five years ago I created a networking group, Disaster Divas. It’s a fun group for women from emergency management, a pretty male-dominated field, for mentoring and networking.

**FSEM: What’s something unique about yourself, something others may be surprised to learn about you?**

**SM:** My friends have given me the name *Sirious Dork* because I’m such a big goofball!

From ages six to 16 I was a competitive highland dancer. I competed all over the Northwest and even got to travel to Scotland when I was nine. I, of course, competed wearing the traditional McLean tartan.

Later in college I was able to study abroad in London and actually received a scholarship through the McLean clan association. Through this I was able to see the McLean family castle! I haven’t been back since 1998, but I’m hoping to go to London in the next few years with my mom. ♦

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**Checking in on Lean**

Since our newsletter hiatus began in April, a number of lean teams have launched across FS. These teams are using visual boards to identify and track the ideas and solutions they create, as well as daily huddles to check-in on progress. Teams across FS provide opportunities for leaders to regularly follow-up and provide support. In the end, teams identify how their work informs departmental and FS strategic objectives.

**Transportation Services: Events team**

The new events workgroup consolidated several events-related functions under a single manager, Brent Curtis. The team conducted its 150-day report out on Sept. 26 and has had the opportunity to put its new processes, training, signage and student worker support to the test during four home football games for the Huskies in September.

**Campus Engineering & Operations: UW Tower daily ops; events, meetings and maintenance**

This team launched in early August and successfully identified standard processes for planned events, refined its work order system to meet established completion dates, and developed a board and process for daily huddles.

**Facilities Employee Services: Faith-based leave**

In response to recently adopted state legislation, state employees will have two unpaid days of faith-based leave. FES used lean to gather a team to develop a process for incorporating this new type of leave into existing leave processes; a training plan for FS leadership; and a communication plan for FS employees. This team reported out on Sept. 30 and will act on their policy, training, and communication plan over the next 30, 60 and 90 days.

**Building Services: Custodial teams from four areas**

**Social Work/Speech, Suzzallo/Allen Library, William Gates Hall and Mary Gates Hall**

Each custodial team launched as a natural workgroup to focus on problems or gaps in the custodial processes specific to each team and building served. By launching natural groups, BSD hopes that team members will be able to identify gaps in service and solutions to address these gaps that can then be shared across similar workgroups in the department.
Not too long ago, to trigger a building’s fire alarm, a wheel with cams would spin, punching in a code that would transmit via telegraph to a fire alarm dispatch center. This McCulloh loop system, patented in 1882 and installed on campus in the 1930s, still had remnants in use in many campus buildings until recently.

“Using this system, the McCulloh wheel would be manually rewound after each transmission,” said Ed Sedlak, of the campus fire alarm shop. “The system was intricate and fixed; it could not be adapted as building uses and fire alerts evolved over time.”

For 10 years Facilities’ fire alarm shop tried to get funding to replace this system, and it’s spent five years installing a new fiber-optic fire alarm system that can transmit information in real-time. That new system is now complete.

Campus Engineering and Operations’ fire alarm shop brings UW-Seattle up to modern signal standards after five diligent years

In April 2007 both the Virginia Tech massacre and a shooting in Gould Hall changed the way the University of Washington approaches emergency alerts. Together with Environmental Health & Safety, FS submitted a request for state funding to upgrade UW’s alarm infrastructure, which would enable a new campus-wide indoor alert system.

In 2009 the state legislature approved the request and shop 24, the fire alarm shop, began looking at the myriad of systems already in place and set up a methodical process to upgrade old systems, including the McCulloh loop.

In some cases, buildings had already upgraded from the old system, but had difficulty communicating with the new alerts software. Buildings that didn’t have a McCulloh loop system sometimes had fire panels that were more than 30 years old. And with 150 fire panels around campus, there were plenty of unique panels requiring custom upgrades.

“This project was like an onion,” said Fire Alarm Manager Anne Donegan. “We’d peel off one layer of old technology and find other issues with existing infrastructure. Control Technician Geoff Hallett did an amazing job reprogramming panels while continuing to keep the old systems on campus up and running.”
Centralized alerts

In most cases, buildings already had a speaker system, but could only be activated from inside the building. There was no way to make announcements in multiple buildings from a single location.

Today, more than 110 buildings have fire alarm speakers connected to a campus-wide Indoor Alert System, while nearly 40 others have text reader boards and amber strobes for emergency alerts.

“It’s amazing that we can broadcast an alert from a phone or computer anywhere to every building on campus nearly instantly,” said Capital Projects Office (CPO) project manager Jeannie Natta.

The university’s crisis communications committee can now access a system to communicate with campus quickly and easily, rather than going to individual building alarm and fire panels. It’s just one more way the UW campus is ready to do business each day.

“This system is just one more tool campus can use to communicate during emergencies,” said Donegan.

“Others include the website, social media, blue emergency telephones and outdoor speakers, and of course UW alerts via text message or email.”

The new system also makes for an improved workflow for the fire alarm shop.

“We can now see exactly which devices are in alarm by looking at a computer screen elsewhere on campus. In our old system, we’d have to dispatch a person to the building, then manually reset the loop once we figured out exactly which device was in alarm,” said Sedlak.

Difficulties with testing

Shop 24 can only test the system yearly, and several buildings request to be placed on ‘by-pass’ to prevent disruptions to events. Testing has not taken place during class hours, when more people are on campus.

“Shop 24 was just amazing at coordinating the replacement,” said Facilities Services’ Energy Conservation Manager Norm Menter. “Many employees spent multiple weekends on campus working out bugs and reworking panels to ensure everything functions correctly.”

In some cases crews would have to correct issues on a fire alarm panel the same day as testing – the building couldn’t be left without a fully operational fire alarm system.

“Members of shop 24 really put their work and campus safety first,” said Donegan. “It took a lot of coordination between FS’ operational units, CPO, UW-IT, UWPD, three different contractors and UW’s central administration to pull this off.”

In a recognition event held to celebrate the end of the project, Donegan wrote up kudos for more than two dozen project participants.

“This project has been all about teamwork. Members of my team really went above and beyond to make this project happen,” said Donegan.

The project required special accommodations from both CPO and the campus lock shop. In typical building upgrades the necessary areas would be shut down for construction work. This involved a bit of work in each part of campus’ buildings; it wasn’t feasible to shut down entire buildings.

“This project created many smaller projects around campus,” said Menter. “For example, the lock shop has a new way of distributing keys so operational groups like the fire alarm shop can access campus buildings.”

On Sept. 8 the fire alarm shop commissioned the campus-wide Indoor Alert System; the university’s central administration formally accepted the new system.

“The best thing that could happen now is that we never have to use it!” said Donegan.

A model nationwide

Other institutions and businesses are already taking note of the UW’s new infrastructure and alerts system.

“Representatives from Safeco Field came to tour our new system, as well as the University of Puget Sound, Green River Community College and University of Colorado – Boulder,” said Sedlak.

“It really is an innovative system, and we’re early adopters,” said Campus Engineering and Operations Director John Chapman. “We’ve run into all sorts of obstacles along the way, but we will always know that Facilities Services helped to pioneer this new way of keeping our campus safe.” ◆
FES replaces leadership meeting with tour of Husky Stadium

Facilities Employee Services arranged for members of the leadership team around Facilities Services to take a tour of Husky Stadium. More than 40 employees signed up for the tour, which coincided with a perfectly sunny day. Want to see more photos? Visit the Flickr album we’ve set up at http://goo.gl/qY7vm5.

Looking to move up to a leadership position in Facilities Services, such as a supervisor or manager position? Check out the FS Training Center’s practical leadership course series for opportunities to grow your skill set and move up the ladder. You can find more information on training center classes at http://goo.gl/07ung0.

FS’ newest team:
Strategic planning and Continuous Improvement (SPCI)

Since the FS newsletter hiatus began back in April 2014, FS has welcomed a new department to join with the seven existing departments in the FS family. Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement, led by FS Chief-of-Staff Carol Dickinson, will champion strategy in Facilities, using balanced scorecard and lean as its tools.

The team includes Kevin Kramer, a strategic initiatives analyst. He’ll work with teams to create measurements, analyze data and assist them in using BSC and lean to surpass their strategic targets.

Alicia Halberg is also a member of SPCI, and is the new public information specialist for FS. Coming to FS after three years with Transportation Services, Alicia will help the department to create a comprehensive communications strategy, brand messaging, and other communications materials to help promote FS to the campus, and to the public at large.

Finally, Renee Taculad and Debra Hanna round out the SPCI team as the administrative support staff to Facilities Services. Debra serves as Charles’ go-to for administrative support, and Renee is the air-traffic control that keeps FS up-and-running.

This new team lives up at the FSAB building, though it’s likely you’ll see them at a department near you if you haven’t met them already.

+flu shots

The UW Benefits Office is offering a series of free flu shot clinics for employees, dependents and retirees covered by PEBB.

Bring your health insurance card and photo ID to receive a flu shot at no cost to you, or bring $25 cash or check.

Monday, Oct. 13 – UW Tower
Friday, Oct. 17 – Sandpoint
Tuesday, Oct. 21 – Health Sciences
Wed., Oct. 22 – South Lake Union
Tuesday, Nov. 4 – Health Sciences
Thursday, Nov. 6 – HUB

The SPCI team, from left to right:
Debra Hanna, Renee Taculad, Carol Dickinson, Alicia Halberg and Kevin Kramer.
Building Services recognizes staff for commitment to excellence

Over 300 Building Services employees gathered in the UW Tower Mezzanine on September 18 for the department’s annual recognition event and reception, which honors all team members from both Custodial Services and Recycling & Solid Waste. Individuals achieving length of service milestones were featured during a slideshow and prizes were awarded for outstanding attendance.

BSD director, Gene Woodard, welcomed and thanked all attendees and engaged the audience with a UW-themed trivia game. This year’s keynote speaker was Mike Martyn, Finance and Facilities Lean Consultant. Associate Vice President Charles Kennedy provided remarks and also shared a statement prepared by UW President Michael Young. Special achievement highlights include custodian Bahelebi “Bobbi” Medhane’s 2014 UW Distinguished Staff award and Kyong Ja Song’s 30 years of service.