

The History of Lactation Stations on the K-State Campuses

In September of 2009, Noel Schulz, wife of then KSU President Kurt Schulz, suggested to the Chair of the President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), Nancy Baker, that the commission consider the project of finding lactation spaces across campus for nursing mothers. The commission agreed this was a worthy project. Brenda Bandi, President of the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition, was contacted for input on how to proceed. Brenda provided Nancy with a list of requirements for lactation areas and offered her assistance in any way it was needed.

A subcommittee of the PCSW was formed, and the members were charged with contacting the building contacts across campus to begin the search for appropriate spaces. Within a couple of months, a list of approximately 30 rooms had been collected. Brenda Bandi joined the subcommittee for a campus tour to discuss the potential and requirements for each space. A second tour was conducted on the Salina campus with Jung Oh, the PCSW representative from Salina, Brenda Bandi, and Nancy Baker. The Olathe campus has not been included in this project.

Once there was a list of rooms that would be feasible for use as lactation areas, a proposal was submitted to Bruce Shubert, Vice President for Administration and Finance. Bruce was receptive to the proposal and asked the people in the Division of Facilities to work with the PCSW. Nancy Baker met with representatives from Facilities and toured the proposed spaces.

In addition to finding spaces in existing buildings, it was agreed that all new builds would include lactation areas. The new the Welcome Center, the Business building, the Engineering Complex, and the new remodel of Seaton Hall all have lactation areas.

Brenda Bandi recommended that each room have a communication system for the nursing mothers to share comments about spaces with each other and with custodians. In addition, it would be helpful to have some sort of disinfected wipes available in each room. The Health and Wellness people from HCS could also use these rooms as a way to provide relevant information to the moms.