

8/25/11 Convocation Remarks from Amy Williams, chair of Catawba's Staff Council

On behalf of the Staff of Catawba College, welcome, and welcome back. The Staff Council is composed of 16 council members, and it represents the full-time staff members of the College, of whom there are currently 160. We are here to assist students in a wide variety of ways, from admission to Catawba and registering for classes, to coaching, counseling, and maintaining campus facilities and systems.

In some ways, the start of a new academic year is like the beginning of a calendar year, but we observe it by buying school supplies instead of with a party. Some of you, I suspect, combined the two. We arrive on campus with fresh expectations, ready for a fresh start. It feels a little like the way we approach January 1st. Most of us are hoping this year, in some way, will be better than last. We might even set goals for the new academic year – like we set New Year's resolutions. Depending on our personal track records keeping New Year's resolutions, the start of a school year may be the only time we bother to make resolutions anymore.

I work in the Development Office here at Catawba. The word "development" in the world of higher education, roughly translates to "fundraising." Obviously, in my department we ALWAYS want this year to be better than last – regardless of how good last year may have been! But that desire to do better, to be better, simply tends to be human nature.

So, if you haven't already thought specifically about our goals this school year, and identified the steps we need to take to achieve them, there's still time. What do you want to accomplish this year not only for yourself, but for our Catawba community? And students, in particular, know that we can't achieve your goals for you, but the staff members of Catawba, as well as the faculty, are here to help support you in your efforts.

Happy New Year!