



University of Virginia ★ Rice Hall ★ 85 Engineer's Way ★ PO BOX 400239 ★ Charlottesville, VA 22904  
[uvacharge@virginia.edu](mailto:uvacharge@virginia.edu) ★ <http://uvacharge.virginia.edu>

Dear Provost Simon,

The UVA CHARGE Tournament of Ideas took place on November 18 and focused on solutions for dual career hires. The audience, comprised of faculty and human resources staff, found the presentations interesting and inspiring. The panelists of dual career couples spoke openly and honestly about the challenges they face and how they navigate those challenges. They also made suggestions on how to better support dual career couples.

Per your request, we are providing you with all of the proposals submitted for the tournament, along with the presentations from the four finalists and their contact information. You will find those materials embedded in this document and easily opened as PDF files. We are also including several ideas submitted to us “unofficially”.

One theme did stand out among the proposals and the personal stories we received: the need for a full-time, dedicated staff and office to handle dual careers across the university whether for faculty or staff. Currently, the Dual Career office in Human Resources works on dual career issues for staff on a part-time basis as part of many other duties. As you know, the Provost Office handles faculty related dual career placements in collaboration with the school HR departments, and this too is one of many other responsibilities. What we heard from many submissions and emails, is the need for a single dual career office that handles all aspects of dual career hiring for staff and faculty as its full-time responsibility. This would provide coordination, communication, and networking across schools and administrative offices.

Another theme that emerged from the presentations was the idea of “career agency”—the recognition that many dual career partners want to continue their current career and have agency over that career trajectory. As Michael Livermore outlined in his winning proposal, not all dual career spouses want to hop from job to job, taking whatever is available. The university can address dual career challenges by creating solutions that allow people to have agency over their careers, and Michael outlines a few ideas.

The four finalists expressed interest in meeting with you and any other members of the Provost's Office to further discuss these ideas. Please let CHARGE know if you want to continue this discussion. We will be sharing these ideas with the Faculty Senate.

Regards,

Gertrude Fraser, PI UVA CHARGE

Pam Norris, Co-PI UVA CHARGE

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## Presentations of 4 Finalists

Michael Livermore was the winner with Murielle de Wekker the runner up.



PresentationMurielle  
DeWekker.pdf



Tournament of  
Ideas-DK\_Harris.pdf



Livermore\_Norton\_pr  
esentation.pdf



dual career  
slides.pdf

## Contact Information for finalists

Michael Livermore and Lia Norton:

[mal5un@virginia.edu](mailto:mal5un@virginia.edu)

[ln5w@virginia.edu](mailto:ln5w@virginia.edu)

Murielle de Wekker

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Devin Harris

[dkh2a@virginia.edu](mailto:dkh2a@virginia.edu)

Paul Shepherd and Lois Shepherd:

[paul@paulkshepherd.com](mailto:paul@paulkshepherd.com)

[l1s4b@virginia.edu](mailto:l1s4b@virginia.edu)

## All Proposals

CHARGE received a total of 11 proposals.



Baker\_ToI\_Proposal.  
pdf



Bang\_ToI\_Proposal.  
pdf



DeWekker\_ToI\_Prop  
osal.pdf



Garey\_ToI\_Proposal.  
pdf



Harris\_ToI\_Proposal.  
pdf



Kessler\_ToI\_Proposa  
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Livermore\_ToI\_Prop  
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## Additional Ideas & Unofficial Submissions

### Synopses of emails sent to CHARGE

1. Have different HR departments at UVa sponsor networking events with local business (NGIC, etc.). Bring dual career couples together so they can network.
2. UVa used to do this in the past but they don't anymore - reinstate considering spouse applicants as internal candidates
3. Create a listserv that all dept chairs, deans, school HR directors, and the provost's office are on to share dual career needs and opportunities
4. Create a listserv for non-academic dual career spouses that would announce to depts., centers, school HR, and local business partners the availability of talent
5. Have 1 office that is responsible for all dual career situations—faculty have no idea who to call if it's in another school or non-academic; decentralized approach is not working; dual career work is part-time work for all HR people and UVa needs a full time dedicated office on this
6. Several emails indicated academic and non-academic spouses/partners expected UVAs dual career placement services to find them a job before they moved here. Heard many concerns from faculty and HR that expectations need to be managed
7. Several emails and phone calls requested better family-friendly policies and change in culture regarding women faculty who have children; given links to [family friendly policy training](#)
8. Panelists during the tournament noted that nobody reaches out to the accompanying spouse/partner on arrival and this is the most stressful time; 2 panelists grew up in military families and noted the military moves people around every 3 years but you always feel like you are part of a community as soon as you move in—while the moving around is similar in academia, we are missing the community and welcoming element.

### Childcare and/or Dependent Care Benefits Proposal

Providing childcare benefits, including leave for childbirth or care, are a low cost solution to retaining STEM faculty members. Sometimes, however, faculty and staff without children view these benefits as discriminatory and unfair. In addition, they are but a small section of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Instead, the university could offer broadly defined "dependent care" benefits that cover not only leave for childbirth and child care, but also leave to care for the employee's spouse, parent, or child. This alternative recognizes the value of all faculty and staff contributions and the various roles they must play as family members, regardless of their stage of life.

A slightly different take on this benefit program would "transitions" benefits, which includes (but is not limited to) birth, adoption, an elder dying, self-care after major surgery, drug rehab,



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etc. There are companies, such as SelectPlus <http://www.selectplus.com/program.html> (offered through Bright Horizons), that are designed to administer this kind of benefit. These benefits are more in line with the full FMLA rule.

Here is an example of what one of our peer universities in the U.S. is doing:

Summary of the proposed family leave policy at the University of New Hampshire:

- a.) A semester of paid leave should be made available to *all* faculty members with a qualifying FMLA event.
- b.) The semester of paid leave should be extended to *both* parents if they are both employees of the University of New Hampshire. However, to ease the burden on departments that house both faculty members, we recommend that the parental leaves should then be taken sequentially rather than simultaneously within a 12-month period.
- c.) The semester of paid leave may begin within a period of 3-months before or up to 9-months after the qualifying FMLA event, including the birth/adoption of a child.
- d.) An Active Service and Modified Duties policy (defined below) also should be made available to faculty members dealing with personal-life situations, including new parenthood, foster care of children, care for an elderly parent, illness of the faculty member or someone in his/her immediate family, death of a spouse or child, or other identified catastrophic situation.

While this policy is written for faculty, it should also be extended to staff.



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## Dual Career Approach: Curry School

### Challenge:

Finding a successful job placement for a trailing partner who also is in academia.

### Hurdles:

- You often are not aware of a trailing partner until later in the recruitment, so time is an issue.
- Mindset that this is a challenge and that other units around Grounds may not be open to cooperation.
- Cost of position creation if one is not already posted, both politically and monetarily.
- Overcoming the second fiddle syndrome – both from the perspective of the trailing partner and the receiving organization.

### Approach:

At the outset it is important to turn the idea of a trailing partner into an opportunity to add new talent to the Institution, instead of a challenge that is going to lose you a primary partner if you don't find a successful solution. Starting off with a positive mindset and a can-do attitude is key. I try to remember that what comes around goes around and that we are a Cavalier Community that should work together to help each other out.

A hand's on approach to establish a rapport with both partners is extremely important. You want both professionals to feel as if they are being recruited into our community. As an HR professional, I want to meet with the trailing partner as soon as possible – in person is best, but Skype or the phone will work if the partner is not on Grounds. I prefer to have their CV in advance of our first meeting/discussion in order to guide our conversation. I use the initial conversations to introduce myself, talk about what I can do to help, and establish a rapport. These meetings can be with both partners, as it is important to establish a helpful and responsive image with both professionals. I also am careful not to over or under promise anything. While I want to keep them engaged and be as helpful as I can, I also am upfront about what I can and cannot do.

My approach focuses first on UVA positions, both existing and possibly created, then on positions at other academic institutions within an acceptable driving range for the trailing partner, and finally on options outside of academia if the professional is willing to entertain that as a possibility.

### Initial Conversation:

Sometimes the trailing partner has already had an initial conversation with the dean, an associate dean,<sup>5</sup> or a chair or center director. Once they refer them to me I ask where the conversation has already been and where I need to pick up. What I outline below is where I begin if I am their first contact:



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