Work-Life Balance Panel Discussion

Session Speakers
Ms. Ann Carr  
Athletics

Ms. Anna Chromiak  
Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Entomology and Plant Pathology

Mr. Darrell Easley  
Graduate Studies in Business

Mrs. Jennifer Easley  
Sponsored Programs Administration

Mr. Jeff Echols  
Biological Sciences

Mrs. Katie Echols  
Office of Research and Economic Development

Seminar Abstract
Do you struggle to get dinner on the table for your family after working all day? Have you ever felt guilty at work for not spending enough time with your kids? Or is time for yourself the first thing to go when balancing everything else you need to do? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then this panel discussion is for you. A panel discussion on work–life balance will feature MSU colleagues talking about their work–life balance challenges and strategies for coping. The discussion will be moderated by Meg Arnold.

Biographical Sketches for Panel
Ms. Ann Carr
A veteran of 20 years in athletic administration at MSU and a former Lady Bulldog, Carr came to MSU to play basketball and never left. Her goal was to be the first female academic counselor in the athletic department, and although she was not, she has certainly been among the firsts in the athletic department. She was the first female academic counselor to the football team; she is the first female African-American to hold the position of senior associate athletic director, as well as senior woman administrator (SWA).

Carr has served in several positions in the athletic department since her arrival in 1993; she has been the academic counselor to several women teams, as well as, to the football team. She has also been an adjunct professor on campus. She serves as the director of the Lifeskills program, the advisor to the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) & M-club, serves as the sports administrator to women’s basketball, volleyball, and softball teams. She also represents the women’s sports programs at the conference office. She is currently on several NCAA
committees, MSU committees, and community committees. She has also served as a facilitator to many NCAA leadership programs. She has taken an active role in involving athletes in the community through the Lifeskills program and conducting seminars that prepare them for the future. Having been a former athlete, she understands the importance of students stepping outside of their comfort zone and taking on different challenges in their lives. Her goal is to get more women involved in athletics and expose them to the different areas of athletics so they can see the potential jobs available.

Carr is a 1990 graduate of MSU and later earned a master’s degree in counseling from MSU in 1992. She has one daughter. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

**Ms. Anna B. Chromiak**

Anna received her bachelor of science degree from the University of Delaware in 1981 and her master of science degree from Auburn University in 1984. She began work with the USDA-ARS laboratory in Auburn in 1984 where she worked in research as a research assistant until 1990. During these years she met and married Joseph who was working on his Ph.D. at Auburn. In 1990 they moved to Rhode Island where she took a research assistant position running a molecular diagnostic laboratory and doing leukemia research at the Roger Williams Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island. In 1997, they moved to Atlanta, GA. She took a position with the Mechanical Engineering Department at Georgia Tech that started as a medical research assistant. After two years, she was promoted to laboratory manager for the Parker H. Petit Institute of Bioengineering and Biosciences. She remained in this position until 2001. Joseph accepted a position at Mississippi State and they moved to Starkville, MS. She began working at MSU as the manager of facilities and research for the newly formed Life Sciences and Biotechnology Institute (LSBI). In July of 2001, their son Joseph was born. In 2004, she became the manager of facilities and research for Dr. Scott Willard and Dr. Peter Ryan in the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences to facilitate the Federal Biophotonics Initiative. In September of 2004, Joseph was diagnosed with cancer and passed away in January of 2008. In the fall of 2008, Anna changed departments with Dr. Willard and became the manager of facilities and research for Dr. Willard and the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. The department has since expanded and she is currently the manager of facilities and research for the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Entomology and Plant Pathology.

**Mr. Darrell Easley**

**Mrs. Jennifer Easley**

Darrell and Jennifer Easley have been married for nearly 17 years and have four children: three sons, ages 15, 12, 9, and one “baby” girl, age 5. Darrell is the director of MBA Programs at MSU and Jennifer is the director of MSU Sponsored Programs Administration.

Darrell earned his bachelor of business administration degree from MSU and his MBA from Belhaven University. He is currently seeking to enroll in a Ph.D. program at MSU. Jennifer earned both her Bachelor and Master of Professional Accountancy degrees at MSU and is in her final year of the MSIS program at MSU. She is also a Certified Management Accountant. Both
Darrell and Jennifer are active in their church where Darrell serves as deacon. They are also involved in various organizations such as professional societies and advisory boards.

**Mr. Jeff Echols**  
**Mrs. Katie Echols**

Jeff and Katie Echols have been married for 10 years and have two children. Their daughter, Melanie, is eight and their son, Andrew, is seven and both are very active in sports. Melanie participates on two soccer teams and Andrew plays baseball. Jeff is the director of lab operations and instructor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Mississippi State University. He earned both his bachelor and master degrees at MSU. Katie is the education and outreach coordinator for the Mississippi EPSCoR project in the Office of Research and Economic Development. She earned both her bachelor and master degrees at MSU and is currently working on her Ph.D. in Public Administration. They are both members of professional organizations and Jeff serves on the governing board for a local water association and Katie serves on the EOD Leadership Board for NSF EPSCoR.