

Couple Recognition

TAKING A BOLD STEP, UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT BILL BRODY OFFERS BENEFITS TO SAME-SEX DOMESTIC PARTNERS.

It's not hard to understand why neurologist Constance Johnson might be a little resentful when she looks at the pile of bills for the extensive surgery performed on Karen Stell, her partner for the last six years. It's not so much the amount of money that she and Stell still owe that bothers her as the fact that her Hopkins colleagues don't have to worry about such gigantic health care bills for their spouses. Heterosexual spouses can be covered by Johns Hopkins' generous benefits package. Same-sex partners can't.

Johnson, an associate professor of neurology, has felt the unfairness of this double standard for years. Now, thanks to her efforts and others like her on the University Diversity Council, and with the support of University organizations like the WorkLife Task Force and the Medical School Council, this long-standing inequity is about to end.

President Bill Brody this week announced a policy decision that would extend University benefits to same-sex domestic partners, bringing Johns Hopkins University into line with peer institutions