

At the Inbody House I'm on the maintenance staff, but I'm not the primary decision-maker when it comes to things like furniture arrangement, wall art, and especially paint color. For that there is a committee of one that makes those decisions, my wonderful wife, Jennifer.

Only she doesn't make those decisions very quickly on paint color. We recently repainted our living room and I want to say that we went through about 100 of those paint chips when you count color, brightness, and sheen. It took MONTHS for her to analyze each color under different lighting to narrow down the colors from 20 to 10 to 4 to the final 1.

A quick aside here. Where do they come up with these names for colors? City Loft, First Star, Iron Ore? Remember paint colors like blue and light blue. That's gone. They have to have fancy names now. It's spreading too. Charcuterie Board? Really? Sounds like Meat and Cheese Tray got a new marketing director. Back to the living room paint job now.

At the end of the day, and under threat of losing her maintenance department who was running out of vacation from his side job as President of the local community college, she picked, "Modern." What used to be called beige. And off we went! After we did all the work to choose it and paint with it, at the end, you guessed it, she didn't like it. Sigh.

Such it is for our maintenance crew sometimes at the college. Over and over they say, "We don't care, just pick a color." And similar situations have occurred. I recall one person I worked with in the past had a test wall painted six times before they made a decision on color. We also build walls and offices, only to have to remove them a few years later due to a changing situation. I've often said, if I could build the campus out of Legos I would.

Our maintenance staff is just outstanding at NCCC! So is our custodial staff, groundskeeper, and all of our office staff. They are the unsung heroes of the college.

I love the folks who work behind the scenes to make sure all of the paperwork, reports, and records are done to the satisfaction of our many outside agencies. At the end of the day we are a bureaucracy in order to provide fair and equal treatment, and that requires wonderful office staff to pay the bills, process student federal aid, make reports for the state and the accreditors, and on and on.

Our custodial staff is just excellent, keeping the college looking great every day. Do you have a teenager or two in your house like I did? Ever find it difficult to clean up after them? Try about 300 18-20 year-olds in the residence halls, and more still in the classrooms and labs. It's a lot for our staff to do, but they do it so well!

Hardly a week goes by when someone doesn't stop to tell me how nice our campus looks. That's not by accident. Our groundskeeper is tirelessly mowing, planting, watering, and weeding. It's a big property to manage and he does a great job with it.

Our maintenance staff, they do amazing things. While we have fewer classes in the summer and many of the 9-month employees are on break, our maintenance staff kicks it into another gear. They repair broken things of course, but they are also renovating spaces, building new structures, updating old buildings and adding new features.

Of course you know about our new Mitchell Career and Technology Building going up in the industrial park in Chanute. Our maintenance department is helping to coordinate that major construction project

with Lloyd Builders. What you might not know is that our maintenance staff, with some contract help, is also:

Adding air conditioning to the multi-purpose building (yes, it has NEVER had air conditioning),

Renovating the bathrooms in one of the residence halls,

Building a greenhouse on the Chanute campus,

Renovating the main office area, part of which had not been renovated since it opened in 1968, and

Preparing for a large outdoor refrigerator/freezer for the Student Union kitchen.

Those are just the big projects. There are lots of smaller projects as well. They are BUSY. And while they occasionally have to put up with a little indecision about where something is going to go or what color it is going to be, they also do so with a great attitude. Most importantly, they do great work!

This campus exists for our students and for our community. It was and continues to be a major investment for our county residents, one that I want you to be proud of. Thanks to the men and women of our unsung heroes departments it continues to be an asset to the area. My sincerest gratitude to our wonderful staff for all they do to keep the college up to date and looking so good!

And now, back to the paint store for take two of the painting of the living room project.

If you have any questions about this article or anything else please contact me at [binbody@neosho.edu](mailto:binbody@neosho.edu).