Division News and Standouts, November 2020

Thank you to all the Mask Up! Photo Contest participants! (Left to right, top row: Alexis George, Brandon Jones, Brooke Bulow, Robert Valdez, Shauna Sobers, Dave Dessauer, Terry Tibby; second row: Terrance Hines, Jamie Rainelli, Kyle St. Nicholas, Claudette Campbell, Melinda McMichael, Jessica Garcia, Alice Clayton; third row: Kimberly Nielsen, Jake Akin, Miranda Larralde, Paula Harvard, Sonia Reagins-Lilly, Winston Chapman, Carol Longoria; fourth row: Marilyn Russell, Julie Newton, Don Duty, Alma Garcia, Jenny Walker, Bethany Wendler; fifth row: Sabrina Owens, Chris Burnett, Desiree Alva, Jess Cybulski, Cheryl Le Gras, Ashley Jones, Eli Veail; sixth row: Ginger Bloomer, Gloria Pena-Spener, Dwight Monteith, Rachel Cohen Ford, Ian Overman, Alisha Barnebey, JD Castro)

Center for Students in Recovery

- Students, staff, faculty and community members joined us for our virtual Fall Costume Party on Oct. 30. This new event celebrated the fall season and ended with a fall-themed scavenger hunt.
- Register for our last Recovery Ally Training of the semester, Nov. 6, 4 p.m. This virtual training helps reduce stigma toward people with substance use disorders or who are in recovery, and increases awareness about people living in recovery.

Counseling and Mental Health Center

- As we continue to navigate a challenging fall season, we recognize the ongoing impact of multiple stressors among members of our UT Austin community. When multiple stressors occur, especially stressors that do not have a defined end date, the cumulative effect can have negative consequences on our work productivity and engagement, and they may adversely affect our physical and mental health and well-being. Find ways to support your team members, including student employees, in this email to supervisors from Internal Communications.
- If students have a counseling telehealth appointment but do not have a private space to conduct the appointment, they may use an office on the fifth floor of the Student Services Building.
- Texas Well-being developed resources that support student well-being in virtual learning environments and also partnered with the Faculty Innovation Center to share these recommendations for instructors.
- Voices Against Violence observed Relationship Violence Prevention Month during October with a series of virtual events to raise awareness and educate students about healthy relationships.

New Student Services

- We're planning virtual Spring Orientation to welcome new transfer students Jan. 11–12. They'll learn about campus resources and opportunities, as well as meet with their academic college and advisor.
- Our team is a key partner in the campus-wide First Generation Commitment Working Group's third annual First-Generation Celebration Week. Virtual events Nov. 8–14 will celebrate first-generation students and their accomplishments. Dr. Lilly will provide a brief welcome message shared on Student Success Initiatives social media channels on Nov. 9.
- At the Horns Helping Horns monthly meeting on Oct. 5, staff shared information about applying to graduate school. Texas Career Engagement, School of Law and McCombs School of Business staff shared information about the admissions process.
Ashley Richardson (top row, second from left) and Aaron Bandy (top row, third from left, Counseling and Mental Health Center) lead Neurodiversity Training: How Can I Help?

- In honor of Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month, our Longhorn TIES (Transition, Inclusion, Empower, Success) program partnered with Counseling and Mental Health Center staff to offer “Neurodiversity Training: How Can I Help?” This training helped students, faculty and staff understand neurodiversity (such as autism, ADHD and other mental health conditions) and learn ways to support neurodiverse students.

Sarah Remelius and Luz Martinez Aburto at Picnic @ the Park

- As part of the Division of Student Affairs Programming Council, our off-campus team hosted Sprouting Self Care (Oct. 15) and the Picnic @ the Park (Oct. 23) to engage students. Learn more about this new initiative in the Vice President for Student Affairs news section.

Office of the Dean of Students

Sorority and Fraternity Life Staff Arianne McArdie, Grace Bova and Darius Jones
• Sorority and Fraternity Life invites staff and faculty to participate in Wear Your Letters Wednesday on Nov. 4. Wear your sorority or fraternity letters, snap a photo and tag #TexasWYLW and @UTAustinSFL on social media.
• Encourage student employees and volunteers to sign up for the Leadership and Ethics Institute’s CoachUT. Contact Bethany Wendler with questions.

Recreational Sports

• We launched the fall edition of Inside RecSports, our biannual digital and print magazine featuring the latest stories about the department, staff and alumni.
• The Longhorn Run Committee is launching the UT '24 Nike Run Club Challenge taking place Nov. 1–15, to familiarize students with the Longhorn Run and encourage them to reach new goals.
• Active Living Learning Community residents completed First Aid/CPR/AED certification and participated in an intramural sports field day. Community members, led by Assistant Director Joe Wise, will conclude the semester with a TeXercise class on Nov. 4.
• Development staff hosted a virtual happy hour for current and former Fitness & Wellness program staff and alumni on Oct. 22. The event featured a Halloween costume contest and treats.
• Fitness & Wellness program staff have developed a virtual Senior Fit Series for RecSports members and non-members striving to maintain or improve their range of motion, muscular strength, flexibility and balance. The series is designed for, but not limited to, adults age 65 and older.
• Outdoor Recreation staff are working on plans to host special Climbing Nights at the Gregory Gym Climbing Wall, such as last month’s Longhorn Ladies Climbing Hour, to encourage more students to explore indoor climbing.

Texas Parents

• We are experiencing an especially busy semester since our team serves as the primary campus resource for all Longhorn parents and families. While our team is primarily working remotely, we rotate one staff member to be in the office Monday through Friday to receive packages for students, meet with students as needed, and send out our membership welcome packets.
• To address some commonly-asked questions about campus operations and the Fall 2020 plan, we created a new section in our eNewsletter. It highlights information and shares resources that contain helpful information about what’s happening on campus.

University Health Services

• We are encouraging students, faculty and staff to make plans to participate in Proactive Community Testing before traveling or heading home for Thanksgiving break. It’s recommended to get tested every seven days. Testing is free, quick, painless (saliva-based) and convenient. No appointment required.

• We immunized 8,093 students, faculty and staff during our annual flu shot clinic held in the Texas Union Ballroom Sept. 28–Oct. 23. Any students, faculty or staff who weren’t able to get a flu shot at the clinic can make an appointment to get one at University Health Services.
• Every three years, our team volunteers to go through accreditation with the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care. This process shows that our organization participates in ongoing self-evaluation, peer review and education, to continuously improve our care and services. The surveyors were onsite for two days and had glowing remarks.
• Check out our new social media series, “Healthyhorns Highlights,” on Fridays that highlights our staff members, teams and their contributions.
• SHIFT staff partnered with Campus Events + Entertainment and Alamo Drafthouse over Halloween weekend to offer The Night SHIFT: Halloween Edition. It allowed students to host a virtual or socially-distanced movie night with friends, showing Clue or The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

University Housing and Dining
Dane Cessac and Linda Thompson serving German specialties at Wiesn Fest.

- On Nov. 19 our chefs at J2 and Kins Dining will prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, including a roasted vegetable carving station and assorted fall desserts. On Oct. 14 and 15, they served up bratwurst, soft Bavarian pretzels and other German specialties for Wiesn Fest.

Balbina Rojas and Dolores Castillo serve up fair food at 40 Acres Fair.

- To help students feel at home on our campus, our team hosted 40 Acres Fair on Oct. 8, planned by the Division Programming Council. More than 500 students enjoyed fair food favorites, live music and a visit from the UT Austin cheerleaders.

Christina Pearce, Aimee Huard, Mynor Rivera, Neil Kaufman, Adriana Rojas, Don Ates, Johnny Sanchez, Alex Rapp and Justin Jaskowiak at the staff appreciation event.
Our dining team used the department’s new smoker to serve up a barbecue lunch as a thank-you to nearly 500 team members who are working on campus. The luncheons were held Oct. 5–8 and Oct. 21.

University Unions

- Campus Events + Entertainment is coming up with new programming ideas to host safe, socially-distanced events. They organized a concert on Oct. 7 at Texas Performing Arts Center featuring Swimming with Bears. Culture Shock, a showcase of Black talent at UT Austin, was livestreamed on YouTube on Oct. 23. For Halloween they invited students to a virtual murder mystery game, “Among Us,” on Oct. 31.

Planter Box

- The Unions Maintenance team is currently building planter boxes to help construct a vertical vegetable garden on the fourth-floor patio in the Texas Union Building. This project has been funded by the Office of Sustainability’s Green Fund. Stay tuned for more updates and opportunities to help with the garden.

Virtual Tower Tour

- Lead Graphic Designer Jeff Sladck created an innovative virtual tour experience for our facilities to help introduce University Unions spaces to those who aren’t currently on campus. He also created a virtual Tower Tour as a socially-distanced alternative to our in-person tour.
• ’Tis the season to have some fun — view Best Sweater Contest guidelines and enter a photo by Dec. 1!
• Division staff are invited to drive or walk through the Burnt Orange Wonderland on Dec. 3, 1–3 p.m., San Jacinto Residence Hall. There will be food, photo opportunities and seasonal fun.

Longhorn Family Leadership Council

• Our development team met with our Longhorn Family Leadership Council on Oct. 30.

• Alumni, donors and friends gathered (virtually) with Dr. Lilly and Division staff during the Vice President for Student Affairs Fall Reunion Tailgate on Oct. 31.
• The federally-required biennial review for the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act was distributed to students, faculty and staff on Oct. 27.
• Our Texas Talks speaker series continues on Nov. 17, 6 p.m. (speaker TBD).
• Our newly-formed Division of Student Affairs Programming Council is planning fun events that make students feel at home on campus. The events are listed in our Division Events Calendar with others from our nine departments.
• Check out our top ten list for student engagement that was a highly-clicked feature in the Texas Parents’ October newsletter to parents and families.

**Staff Standouts**

**Jeremiah Gunderson (Office of the Dean of Students) with fiancee Traci Blakemore at the Oct. 24 game**

*Jeremiah Gunderson, Office of the Dean of Students, was Texas Longhorns’ Texas Lottery Veteran of the Game on Oct. 24.*

*Terrance Hines, University Health Services, Justin Jaskowiak, Mylon Kirksey and Aaron Voyles, University Housing and Dining, and Kelly Soucy, Office of the Dean of Students, presented “Strategies for Managing COVID-19 in Residence Halls” webinar on Oct. 8.*

*Brandon Jones, University Housing and Dining, presented “Leadership Under Construction: Renovating the Leader in You” at the Southwest Affiliate of College and University Residence Halls (SWACURH) virtual annual meeting on Oct. 24.*

*Sara Kennedy, Office of the Dean of Students, was a panelist in a student-led event on Oct. 22 during Free Speech Week, entitled “At the Edge of Knowing: Confronting the Unknown, Unanswered and Unimagined.”*

*Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Soncia Reagins-Lilly gave words of encouragement at the final meeting for Sorority and Fraternity Life’s Emerging Leaders Institute.*

*Justin Samuel, University Housing and Dining, presented “Leadership in Student Affairs Career Story” on Oct. 28 for the School of Human Ecology’s Alumni Mentor Speaker Series. He was also selected to be part of the Spring 2021 cohort of the NASPA Supporting, Expanding and Recruiting Volunteer Excellence (SERVE) Academy for Region III.*

*Audrey Sorrells, Office of the Dean of Students, has been selected as the vice-chair/chair-elect of the Faculty Council Admissions and Registration Committee.*

**Kelly Soucy (top right, Office of the Dean of Students) and Katy Redd (bottom, Counseling and Mental Health Center) during Students Helping Students panel**

*Kelly Soucy, Office of the Dean of Students, and Katy Redd, Counseling and Mental Health Center and University Health Services, presented the “Students Helping Students” panel discussion on Oct. 22 as part of The University of Texas at Austin Student Foundation ContribUTe 2020 fundraising campaign.*
Thea Woodruff, Counseling and Mental Health Center and University Health Services, presented “Texas Well-being: Collaborating with University Faculty to Support Student Mental Health” for a NASPA webinar on Oct. 15.

Several Recreational Sports staff presented at the NIRSA Region IV Conference, held virtually Oct. 26–29.

- Samantha Caufield and Erin Wells: “Gen Z & COVID = Reimagining Staff Training”
- Cecilia Lopez Cardenas and Q’Anteria Roberson: “Marketing x Programming: A Recipe for Success!”
- Bridget Tasker and Chad Zimmerman: “Yeah, Well, That’s Just, Like, Your Opinion, Man.”

Staff Shoutouts

Gloria Zarate and Guadalupe Almanza at 2400 Nueces

Guadalupe Almanza and Gloria Zarate, University Housing and Dining, worked tirelessly over the summer to prepare rooms for new students moving into 2400 Nueces apartments. They continue to keep the facility clean, quickly pivot to accommodate unexpected needs, and create personal connections with students.

Darci Doll and Joe Wise, Recreational Sports, have played a critical role in bringing safe in-person programming for students through intramural sports. The team displayed creativity and flexibility to make modifications in one of the most impacted programmatic areas by providing new sports and contests to keep the UT Austin community engaged in a safe manner.

Ian Overman, Recreational Sports, has consistently gone above and beyond to support his teammates in facility operations and programs. His positive attitude, attention to detail and organizational skills have been instrumental in navigating the various aspects of reopening facilities and resuming programming.

Sylvia Ramirez, Recreational Sports, has been instrumental in carefully coordinating with vendors the production of countless facility signage – ensuring their timely execution to our quality standards. In addition, she worked to secure custom reusable face masks for RecSports student employees and full-time staff well in advance of our reopening.

“A Tip of the Hat to...”

...Center for Students in Recovery staff who received this grateful message from a student:

“I really appreciated our phone call today and am interested in exploring the different groups/events/support systems that the Center for Students in Recovery has available. It feels good already to feel like I have some control over the next steps in my recovery journey.”

...Recreational Sports, receiving these shoutouts from TeXercise participants:

“Hello, Texercise Team! I am in Austin doing workouts in person as well as online. The workouts and classes are very fun. I appreciate what you have done to bring the program back.”

“I TeXercise every Tuesday and Thursday morning with Shannon at her 6:30 a.m. Tabata class. I started going to (her) lunchtime Tabata class and was hooked (no pun intended). With many fitness classes going virtual, Shannon let me know I could get a virtual pass and join her class virtually. I’ve been doing just that and loving it!”