Division News and Standouts May 2021

Center for Students in Recovery

- Students can apply for one of our scholarships by May 14. These scholarships open up twice a year near the end of the fall and spring semesters.
- Stay tuned later this month for our new Longhorns for Recovery Circle meeting. This activity-based informal meeting will be open to staff, students and faculty in or in the hope of recovery, as well as recovery allies. Meetings will be posted to our social media accounts and calendar.
- On April 16 we hosted a virtual escape room event. Students worked together and acted as intelligence agents to uncover the identity of an art thief. We are planning two escape room events this summer since students enjoyed this so much.
- We hosted the final Recovery Ally Training for the spring semester on April 9. Through this program, we have trained 800 staff, students and faculty to be able to support students in recovery on campus.

Counseling and Mental Health Center

- Let your students know we are helping them Fuel Up for Finals on May 10. The Longhorn Wellness Center team will have a day of events and giveaways that highlight mindfulness, nourishment and self-care.
- Austin City Council Member Kathie Tovo recognized the Healthy Student Organization Program on April 27. The Austin City Council recognizes this group of students annually for their work to promote health and well-being on campus.
- Our Longhorn Wellness Center team promoted positive emotional well-being during a series of events for Mental Health Promotion Week April 12-16. Programs explored mindfulness, community, diversity and inclusion, self-care, gratitude and resilience. SHIFT staff participated in a Mental Health Roundtable that included student leaders.
- SHIFT Shorts is a new series of interviews with campus and community partners to highlight their work in changing the culture of substance use on the Forty Acres and beyond. Fiona Conway (Steve Hicks School of Social Work) was the April speaker on addiction and mental health.

New Student Services

- We will host seven Freshman Orientation and three Transfer Orientation sessions this summer through June and July, with hybrid and virtual options. Students can choose whether they want to experience being on campus for a portion of their orientation session with small group interactions, peer activities and an overnight stay. We will continue to follow the university’s health and safety guidance throughout this in-person programming. While programming for the hybrid orientation model is still being finalized, all college and school meetings, advising sessions and class registration will remain virtual in all freshman and transfer orientation formats, and orientation dates will not change. Students will still have the option to complete orientation 100% virtually. Registration for the hybrid option opens May 10.

- Planning is underway for Longhorn Welcome Aug. 20-29. This series of free virtual and in-person events welcome incoming freshman and transfer students to Living the Longhorn Life®. Freshmen, new transfer students and current sophomores are encouraged to participate. All events will follow health guidance and social distancing guidelines.
- Staff will recognize graduating seniors from the Horns Helping Horns, First-Generation Living Learning Community and Longhorn TIES (Transition, Inclusion, Empower, Success) programs during a celebration on May 10.
- Follow the Off-Campus Initiative (@utoffcampus) on Instagram to connect students to campus resources, ways to explore Austin and upcoming events.
Busting Myths Panelists: (top row) Lisa Sigafoos, Laura Rojeski and Marcos Canihuante (College of Education); (bottom row) Ashley Richardson (New Student Services) and Andrew Dell’Antonio (College of Fine Arts)

- Longhorn TIES celebrated Neurodiversity Acceptance Week April 19-23 with panels and events, including student discussion groups and a movie screening. The Vice President for Student Affairs Programming Team collaborated on the week’s signature event, Celebrate Neurodiversity, on April 20.

Office of the Dean of Students

- Our annual celebration and awards ceremony for student organizations, Evening of Stars, will be held as a hybrid event on May 4.

Students shop at the UT Outpost sidewalk sale.

- Our UT Outpost team in Student Emergency Services held a “sidewalk sale” April 13-16. This large-scale giveaway of professional clothes allowed students to shop the donations acquired throughout the pandemic.
- Our Leadership and Ethics Institute team hosted Step into Leadership on April 16. Students gained valuable leadership skills and built community during this three-hour workshop.
- More than 160 students attended Sorority and Fraternity Life’s Horns Against Hazing: A Series, March 25–April 8. The event series featured student presenters on the definition of hazing, a student panel on healthy community building, and a guest speaker on becoming agents of change.

Recreational Sports

- Join us for the Get Started with RecSports program, a 30-day fitness plan featuring daily pre-recorded workouts taught by some of our best fitness instructors. This holistic program is open to all and does not require a RecSports membership.
- Faculty and staff are invited to join us at the Faculty and Staff Wellness Retreat on May 15. Participants will enjoy a relaxing morning of mindfulness, meditation and hiking at the newly-renovated Pease Park, and will take home a new yoga mat and towel.
- We will host RecSports Field Day on May 11 at Caven-Clark Field, featuring team and individual play. Students can register for this event to take a study break from finals and compete for prizes.
- Celebrate National Employee Health and Fitness Day at the annual Poker Walk. This year’s event for faculty and staff is going virtual, allowing you to complete the one-mile walk from wherever you are, anytime, May 10–16. Register by May 9.
- During a virtual ceremony on May 6, our team will honor student employees who have been selected to receive a 2021 Endowed Scholarship.
Randall Ford participating in Longhorn Run.

- On April 17 over 1,500 runners participated in this year's virtual Longhorn Run. Runners crossed their finish line in 37 states and 14 countries, showing once more that when Longhorns run together, there are no limits.

Kari Terry, Cecilia Lopez Cardenas and President Hartzell at Carothers Residence Hall

- Ahead of Longhorn Run, President Jay Hartzell surprised a freshman participant with a race kit delivery at Carothers Residence Hall. He also caught up with one of the student leaders on the planning committee via Zoom.

Texas Parents

- Incoming (and current) parents and families can now sign up for membership in the Texas Parents Association for the 2021-22 academic year. There are two types of membership: complimentary and supporting. A complimentary U-Touch membership keeps them “in touch” with the university. Supporting members make a tax-deductible gift to the university that “supports” our department. Supporting members receive the same communication as U-Touch members, as well as additional benefits, including access to the Texas Parents closed Facebook group, discounts with local and national vendors, and special opportunities with Texas Athletics.
- We continue to prepare for Online Family Orientation, a robust series of pre-recorded content from university leadership, faculty, students, staff and parent volunteers. View the schedule and registration information.
- Later this month, we will mail the New Parent Guide to 9,000 freshman families. This magazine introduces them to university resources and policies. A digital copy will be available on May 10.

University Health Services
Terrance Hines, Daiva Velez, Genna Niemann and Stephanie Quiroz at the Gregory Gym vaccination site

- We, along with our campus partners, have administered more than 120,000 vaccines at Gregory Gym, and are now beginning the process of moving our vaccination efforts to the Health Transformation Building (HTB), the home of UT Health Austin. The last date to receive a first dose of the two-dose Pfizer vaccine through the Gregory Gym operation will be Friday, May 7; appointments and walk-ins after May 7 will be welcomed at HTB. We will continue to administer second doses at Gregory Gym through May 28. Register to get your vaccine at this convenient, well-organized operation with short wait times.

Grace Bova and Arianna McArdle (Office of the Dean of Students) at Gregory Gym

- Sign up for a volunteer shift at the university’s COVID-19 vaccination site to help answer questions and manage the lines.
- Help promote our campus’ COVID-19 vaccination effort by using one of these Zoom backgrounds at your next meeting.
- Our Proactive Community Testing team completed their 100,000th COVID-19 test last month. Continue to encourage students to participate in this free testing at a convenient on- or off-campus location.
Public Information Team Retreat

- Our Public Information Team welcomed new team members and planned for the fall semester at a retreat on April 15 and 19.

University Housing and Dining

Jester West Single Room 3D Room Tour

- Check out the new virtual 3D room tours for residence halls, University Apartments and event spaces. Read more about this effort and a similar virtual experience in the University Unions facilities.
- We are accepting housing applications for summer and the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Our Marketing and Communications Team solicited questions from incoming freshmen and will create a video with staff and students answering them.
Our Dining Team hosted pop-up kitchens in April for students to sample potential new menu offerings and provide feedback.

Our Sustainability Team celebrated Earth Day with four events: UT Farm Stand, April 14; Southern Homestyle Meal, spotlighting locally-sourced ingredients, April 15; Soap and Face Mask Workshop, April 19; and Longhorn Local Market, April 22.

Residence Life staff inducted 12 students into the National Residence Hall Honorary on April 21.

On April 9 our Student Staff Selection Committee interviewed 81 candidates interested in our summer student staff positions.

The Residence Life leadership team discussed strategic planning, communication, meeting structures and explored team strengths at a retreat on April 2.

Campus Events+Entertainment will host a grab-and-go Chillfest event May 5, noon-4 p.m., Texas Union East Patio, with treats, drinks and ways students can “de-stress” before finals.

In April E+E hosted a series of afternoon musical performances on the patio. This free programming gave students a fun, low-risk way to enjoy live music, while following social distancing protocol and health guidance.
Alex Katz, Sarah Remelius, Marissa Gutierrez and Luz Martinez Aburto (Vice President for Student Affairs) at Forty Acres Fest

- They also brought “Candyland” to life at the annual Forty Acres Fest on April 9. The Vice President for Student Affairs Programming Team partnered on the event.
- The Texas Union has completed a significant plumbing project, and a new project has started to replace walk-in coolers and freezers for food service on the main level and lower level as well as ceiling upgrades in the kitchen areas. Be on the lookout for exciting new food options opening this fall.
- The University Unions Advisory Council awarded the J.J. “ Jake” Pickle Citizenship Award on April 30. The award is presented annually to a UT Austin student whose campus contributions exemplify Congressman Jake Pickle’s leadership and service.

Vice President for Student Affairs

- Celebrate your colleagues receiving staff service awards and hear legislative session updates at the Vice President for Student Affairs Office Hours on May 10. Check out the list of staff service recipients below!
- The Programming Team is hosting Longhorn Send-Off May 3-7 to help students celebrate the end of the semester. Check out this lineup of fun, end-of-semester events to wish students well on final exams and projects.
- On May 12 President Hartzell will announce the President’s Student Employee of the Year Award winner and 10 finalists. Our office co-sponsors this annual recognition with the Office of the President and Human Resources. This year, the award announcement will be merged with the annual faculty and staff awards recognition.
The Longhorn Family Leadership Council is hosting a Lunch and Learn networking event with graduating seniors on May 5. On April 16 the council met to discuss Division of Student Affairs fundraising priorities with the Development Team.

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Soncia Reagins-Lilly and Interim Executive Vice President and Provost Daniel Jaffe shared this COVID-19 vaccine information with students on April 20.

The Student Affairs Leadership Team welcomed special guests Tammara Durham (The University of Kansas), Kevin Jackson (Baylor University) and Daniel Pugh (Texas A&M University) at the April 14 meeting. These VPs overseeing student affairs at their campuses joined us in a conversation about COVID-19's impact.

Staff Standouts

Rachel Cohen-Ford and Robert Valdez, University Housing and Dining, presented “Keeping It Safe: Ways to Successfully Host Large-Scale Outdoor Programming with Campus Partners” at Association of Collegiate Conference and Events Directors-International (ACCED-I) Virtual Annual Conference on March 23.

Valdez also presented “Navigating the Journey to a Ph.D. as a Minority” at the 2021 NASPA Virtual Conference on March 23.

Kayleigh Damphousse, New Student Services, came in second in the “Check My Story Challenge” during the university’s annual online fundraising campaign, 40 Hours for Forty Acres, March 30-31. She fundraised for the First-Generation Living Learning Community.

Lisa Kappil, University Unions, received the 2021 Asian Pacific Islander Knowledge Community Pre-Conference Award at the 2021 NASPA Virtual Conference.
**Sotear Kuy (University Housing and Dining) at HealthPoint Recharge**

Sotear Kuy, University Housing and Dining, provided tips for stir fry cooking during a virtual cooking class at the HealthPoint Recharge event on April 15.

**Paige Muehlenkamp at the Texas Capitol**

Paige Muehlenkamp, New Student Services, testified at the Texas Capitol during a higher education session on House Bill 214. The bill pertains to students enrolled at public institutions of higher education who are homeless or who are/were in foster care. She oversees the Horns Helping Horns program.

**Soncia Reagins-Lilly (left) at the Sorority and Fraternity Life Awards**

On April 14, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Soncia Reagins-Lilly shared welcome remarks at the annual Sorority and Fraternity Life Awards. She was also the featured guest at the Leadership and Ethics Institute’s Longhorn Leadership Chats on the Office of the Dean of Students Instagram channel. In May, Dr. Lilly will support graduating seniors, including participation in First-Gen Graduation and Black Graduation.
Alexis George (top) and Kate Lower at Texas Talks

Kate Lower, University Health Services and Counseling and Mental Health Center, presented “A Year of Resilience and Transition” at the April 21 Texas Talks event. The Vice President for Student Affairs and the Multicultural Engagement Center hosted this speaker series.

Division staff who presented during the UT Wellness Network’s Powering Past the Pandemic: Reconnecting to Wellness on April 30.

- James Butler, Counseling and Mental Health Center and University Health Services: #PoweringPastPandemic Session
- Justin Carter, Office of the Dean of Students: Opening Remarks
- Brittany O’Malley, Counseling and Mental Health Center and University Health Services: Closing Remarks
- Shauna Sobers, University Housing and Dining: #PoweringPastPandemic Session

Staff Shoutouts

Please coordinate with your department communicator if you would like to submit a staff member to be featured.

Wesley Barnett and David Martinez, University Unions, worked long hours with the Texas Union maintenance team to replace a water tank and make other plumbing repairs.

Becky Carreon, Office of the Dean of Students, will retire from the university on May 31 after more than 34 years of service. Carreon has had a profound impact on students and Legislative Student Organization members, and is appreciated by so many students who have had the pleasure of working with her. Marrisa Candela-Maldonado will transition into her role, joining the Office of the Dean of Students from University Health Services.

Sahtiya Hammell, Counseling and Mental Health Center and University Health Services, and Amy Tao-Foster, Counseling and Mental Health Center, coordinated with campus and Austin-area partners on anti-Asian racism events. They continue to provide support and education through ongoing conversations and workshops.

Cheryl Pyle, Office of the Dean of Students, will retire from the university on June 2 after nearly 50 years of service – nine years in University Housing and Dining and the past 41 years in the Office of the Dean of Students. Pyle has touched the lives of all her colleagues, not only through her vast knowledge and expertise, but also through her care, friendship and heart.

The President’s Staff Awards and Staff Service Awards

President Jay Hartzell will honor The President’s Staff Awards recipients with a congratulatory video on May 12. The university is also celebrating 60 Division staff members for their combined 1,075 years of service to The University of Texas at Austin. Congratulate your Division colleagues below!

Staff Service Awards
Counseling and Mental Health Center and University Health Services
Adebanke Adenjou, 15 years
Tanya Betak, 30 years
Neeta Bhakta, 20 years
Chris Brownson, 20 years
Estrellita “Star” Carlos, 10 years
Marla Craig, 15 years
Alicia Garces, 45 years
Paul Gentle, 15 years
Susan Hochman, 10 years
Kathryn Hotrum, 15 years
Joan Long, 10 years
Julie Newton, 30 years
Dian Peavey, 15 years (retired)
Suzanne Ramirez, 20 years
Mary Rhodes, 20 years
Ronnie Ruiz, 10 years
Gerardo Ungo, 10 years
Lee Warren, 15 years

“I love working with college-age students so much, and I love working with my colleagues because of their dedication and commitment to serve the students. Influencing the Longhorn Life means helping students learn how to believe in themselves – it’s a skill. I feel very lucky to get paid to do what I love to do.” – Alicia Garces, 45 years

Office of the Dean of Students
Joanna Pope, 15 years

Recreational Sports
Rhonda Cox, 20 years
E.J. Patterson, 15 years
Manuel Torrez, 15 years

University Housing and Dining
Gilberto Acosta, 20 years
Eva Barba, 45 years (retired)
Marc Chandler, 20 years
Jennifer Cole, 15 years
Yolanda Esquivel, 25 years
Michael Farrell, 25 years
George “Tony” Fuquay, 15 years (retired)
Melanie Grice, 10 years
Erica Guerra, 20 years
Treina Jackson, 10 years
Gregory Jenkins, 15 years
Charles Kerrigan, 10 years
Florentino Lopez-Rivera, 10 years
Rudy Martinez, 40 years
Cesar Ramirez, 20 years
Alexander Rapp, 15 years
Oralia Rodriguez, 30 years
David Rodriguez, 15 years
Karina Rodriguez, 15 years
Sehila Rodriguez-Suarez, 10 years
Chris Starche, 10 years
Sarah Webb, 10 years
Leila Williams, 25 years
Lindsay Wilson, 10 years
Robert Yenelavage, Jr., 30 years (retired)
Jonathan Yeo, 20 years
Jessica Yu, 15 years
Gabino Zare, Jr., 20 years
“The team is a close-knit family that I miss very much now that I’m retired. I would do anything for them, and they would do anything for me. I enjoyed seeing the different halls, meeting students from all over the world and being able to help them out.” - Eva Barba, 45 years (retired)

**University Unions**
- Erick Conde, 10 years
- Ural Dewitty, 15 years
- Dwayne Gallmore, 25 years
- Saray Lago, 15 years
- Steve Monroe, 20 years
- Wade Raquet, 10 years
- Kevin Ray, 20 years
- Sylvia Torres, 10 years

**Vice President for Student Affairs**
- Aurora Muñoz, 20 years
- Soncia Reagins-Lilly, 15 years