



Staff Council General Meeting minutes for May 18, 2022

Zoom Meeting 10AM

Minutes recorded by Edith Arredondo, Staff Council Secretary

Board: Caroline Smith, Tremaine Kwasikpui, Krysti Turnquest, Sandra Jacobson, Edith Arredondo

Panelist: Caroline Smith, Staff Council President, Associate Director, Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning; Tremaine Kwasikpui, Staff Council President-Elect, Director of Student Activities; Krysti Turnquest, Staff Council Communications Officer, Director, Accelerated Transfer Academy; Christian Purdy, Talent Development Specialist, ESO; Erica Morales, Director, Benefits & Compensation, ESO

Call to Order: The Staff Council general meeting was call to order by Staff Council President, Caroline Smith at about 10:02 a.m.

Attachments: Meeting PPT with presentations incorporated, Deer Oaks EAP 1-pager

Reports:

Ms. Smith welcomes everyone to the meeting and gives an overview of the meeting agenda.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Ms. Smith calls for a motion to accept last month meeting minutes, which are available on the Staff Council website and have been sent via email to DT Staff. Ms. Turnquest makes the first motion to accept the minutes. Ms. Smith ask for a second motion to accept minutes. Mr. Kwasikpui seconds. Ms. Smith calls for the April meeting minutes to be approved.

WELCOME NEWS GATORS

Ms. Smith proceeds with the first item on the agenda, which is the new UHD Gators who attended this month's New Employee Orientations.

- Antrechelle Dorsey, Manager, Social Media, Enrollment Management
- Armiti Rashidi, Project Coordinator, Marilyn Davies College of Business
- Gabriela Estrada, Accounts Payable Specialist I, Accounts Payable
- Timothy Solis, Success Advisor II, Undergraduate Admissions (*UHD Alum*)
- Heidi Rucoba, Admissions Counselor, Undergraduate Admissions (*UHD Alum*)
- Bill Kwon, Academic Advisor II, Sciences & Technology
- Maria Carrillo, Accounts Payable Specialist I, Accounts Payable
- Sadarion Cerf, Coordinator, Environmental Health & Safety
- John Wagner, Technology Trainer I, Technology Learning Services
- Heather Arriaga, Contact Center Representative, Enrollment Management (*UHD Alum*)
- Cassandra Millhouse, Financial Assistant III, Information Technology (*UHD Alum*)

Ms. Smith enthusiastically welcomes the new employees to UHD.

STAFF GOOD NEWS

Ms. Smith continues with her favorite part of the meeting, Staff Good News.

***Belinda Hernandez**, College Web Technical Support Specialist, M. Davies College of Business
“On April 30th-May 1st, I rode my first MS150 bike ride from Energy Corridor to College Station. The route was a total of 180 miles. This was such an amazing experience to be with my team and the MS organization over the weekend. I met so many people; some living with MS and hearing them say, thank you for doing this. It was a gratifying feeling to know that I am helping raise funds and research to find a cure for this disease.”

Ms. Smith congratulates Ms. Hernandez and lets her know that we are all proud of her great accomplishment.

***Loren Coleman**, Program Coordinator, Humanities & Social Sciences

“My family welcomed Logan James (Baby Lo) into the world in September 2021. The joy and happiness he has brought everyone he comes in contact with melts my heart. For such a little person he has such a huge personality!”

***Heidi Rucoba**, Admissions Counselor, Undergraduate Admissions

“I love my two rescue tabby furbabies. Toro (*brown*) and Meeko (*orange*)!”

Ms. Smith reminds attendees that May is National Pet Month.

***Edith Arredondo**, Library Assistant, Library

Happy Mother’s Day! Edith shares a picture of her mom.

Ms. Smith reminds staff of Mother’s Day and there were submissions to congratulate some of our staff’s moms.

***Krysti Turnquest**, Director, Accelerated Transfer Academy

Celebrating Mom, Maggie, & Zoe, and graduation!

Ms. Smith congratulates Dr. Turnquest and lets her know that we are proud for her accomplishment.

***Linda Harris**, Administrative Assistant I, Facilities Management

Linda shares pictures of her pets, a German Shepherd, cat, and a lizard.

Ms. Smith comments about the pictures expressing that there is the sweetest German shepherd and gorgeous cat but who cannot love a lizard wearing a Harley jacket.

***Erica Skinner**, Technician/Web Support Publications, Accelerated Transfer Academy

Erica shares a photo of her mom, Lillie, and daughter, Cassandra along with one of her with all of her children (Cassandra, Kendrick, and Bobby) in honor of Mother’s Day.

Ms. Smith congratulates Ms. Skinner and thanks her for sharing pictures of her beautiful family.

Erica also shares pictures of her granddaughter’s Chihuahua, Cookie, in honor of National Pet Month.

***Adam Valdez**, EHS Technician, Environmental Health & Safety

“This is Willie Nelson Valdez. He is a 2 ½ year old German Shorthaired Pointer.”

Ms. Smith comments about what a distinguished gentlemen Willie is.

***Thomas Ratliff**, Contracts Supervisor, Facilities Management

Thomas provides time lapsed images of the lunar eclipse that took place on May 15-16.

Ms. Smith thanks Ms. Ratliff for sharing pictures of the eclipse and thinks that they could be used for puzzles.

ESO CHILI COOK-OFF RESULTS

16 teams participated & over 300 attended!

- 1st place – The Chili Enforcers – Sargent Cortez - UHDPD
- 2nd place – Bad Rumor Cookers – Victor Landin – Student Team
- 3rd place – Gator Bayou Cookers – Michael Manuel – Advancement & University Relations
- Best Décor – Gator Bayou Cookers – Michael Manuel – Advancement & University Relations
- People’s Choice Chili – SUC – Academic Advising

Ms. Smith congratulates all the winners and goes over the event. The event started with remarks from President Blanchard and Christian Purdy demonstrated his DJ skills while brave souls were willing to test their endurance on the mechanical bull. Attendees could also enjoy beer sponsored by St. Arnolds, take pictures at the photo booth, and get an airbrush tattoo. In recognition of Employee Appreciation Week, ESO offered numerous free tickets to UHD employees that included a chili tasting bowl and dessert. Ms. Smith congratulates and thanks ESO for bringing back the Chili Cook-off with a great fun event.

GATOR LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Ms. Smith introduces Christian Purdy, ESO Talent Development Specialist and DJ, to talk about learning opportunities for staff. Mr. Purdy thanks Ms. Smith and laughing says that he wants his introduction to be DJ and everything that comes after that all the time.

Mr. Purdy expresses that he recently joined UHD, that it is such a welcoming community, and that he is excited to be part of the team.

Mr. Purdy will teach his first class, Emotional Intelligence on May 19, 2022, in room A626 & Zoom. He shares the link to enroll for the class through the chat and lets staff know that if they enroll, he will be sending the link to join via Zoom an hour before the class. He reminds staff that they can also join him in person in room A626 to enjoy the class and some snacks.

Mr. Purdy continues to give an insight into what the session will entail. Attendees will explore a lot of research regarding Emotional Intelligence. It is a relatively new field, and many people talk about it and have different views on it. Attendees will analyze how it affects both our personal and professional lives. Attendees will use interactive tools to evaluate their emotional intelligence. It will be a sneak peek, but he will also share other options to take a deeper dive into evaluating your emotional intelligence. The session will end with an investigation in ways to enhance our emotional intelligence. It will be a highly interactive class even for those attending via Zoom with fillable PDF handouts. Mr. Purdy will share LinkedIn Learning resources relevant for emotional intelligence if you would like to continue your learning. He will be available to talk with you and give you more resources that we have available through our W.I. Dykes Library. Mr. Purdy also invites staff to attend Mr. Donnie Kesterson’s session the following Wednesday on Motivation and Employee Engagement. An email was shared earlier with instructions on how to enroll.

Mr. Purdy thanks Ms. Smith for the time to share information with staff.

Q: At what time is the Emotional Intelligence workshop?

A: It is from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM but you can start arriving in person at 9:45 and we will stay until probably 11:50.

Ms. Smith tells Mr. Purdy that he did a fantastic job describing the workshop and comments that one can always work on, learn more, and always refine our skills and that it is great that it will be offer both in person and Zoom.

DEER OAKS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Ms. Smith introduces Erica Morales Director of Benefits & Compensation in ESO to talk about Deer Oaks EAP Services.

Ms. Morales thanks Ms. Smith for the introduction, introduces herself, and states that the purpose of her presentation is to talk about UHD's new EAP program. Deer Oaks is now the EAP Service provider as of May 1st. Ms. Morales continues her presentation.

The purpose of an EAP is to provide a variety of services to assist with revolving work and life issues so employees can live happier, healthier, and more balanced lives. Deer Oaks EAP offers 24/7 confidential services to assist with life's challenges free of charge.

All full- and part-time benefits-eligible UHD employees may take advantage of these services. Coverage also extends to employee dependents and household members and continues for six months post-employment which is a new feature provided by Deer Oaks.

Through Deer Oaks, employees may take advantage of three free and confidential short-term counseling per issue. Issues may include stress, anxiety, grief, marital/family challenges, relationship issues, addition, crisis management/trauma and more. Referrals to local community resources, member health plans, support groups, legal resources, and child/elder care/daily living resources are also available.

Employees may arrange for legal services through Deer Oaks such as a 30-minute consultation, a 25% discount on hourly attorney fees, and unlimited online access to legal resources, links, tools, and forms; including an interactive online Simple Will preparation.

Financial assistance by way of unlimited telephone consultations, advice on a range of financial issues such as bankruptcy prevention, debt reduction, financial planning, and identity theft is offered. Employees have unlimited online access to a wealth of educational financial resources, links, tools, and forms.

Deer Oaks supports alternative modes of support, as well. Employees may take advantage of life coaching, stress reduction sessions, and virtual group counseling.

There are work-life services available such as locating pet sitters, event planners, home repair contractors, tutors, travel planning, and moving services. Employees in need of assistance with licensed child and eldercare facilities can find referrals through Deer Oaks using their searchable databases.

Finally, Deer Oaks boasts a new ride reimbursement program. UHD employees can receive reimbursement for a cab, Lyft, or Uber fares (once per year up to \$45) when used if incapacitated due to substance or extreme emotional condition.

There are a number of ways Deer Oaks EAP Services can be contacted:

- Toll-free helpline, 1-888-993-7650
- I-ConnectYou application for iOS and Android devices that supports telephone or video calls, IM, SMS, provides videos and articles and is answered 24/7.
 - Registration code 230182; username/password is UHD
- Website, www.deeroakseap.com
 - Username/password is UHD
- Email to eap@deeroaks.com

Ms. Morales concludes her presentation and asks the audience if they have any questions about Deer Oaks EAP services.

Q: Do you know how they vet the providers?

A: I do not know how they vet them, but I can find out and send you an update.

Q: Will this information be sent via email?

A: Yes, it will be shared in the minutes and correct me if I'm wrong, this has already been sent via email.

C: Yes, Ms. Montalbano sent an email to DT Staff when it launched on May 1 regarding the changes. The provider also provided two informational sessions. So, this presentation is for those who were not able to attend and a refresher. This information is also available on the ESO website.

Ms. Smith thanks Ms. Morales for her presentation because she (Ms. Smith) was unable to attend any of the sessions, so this presentation was very useful. Ms. Morales encourages everyone to take advantage of this wonderful services and hopes that it helps employees with dealing with any issues they could be going through right now.

Ms. Morales takes the opportunity to remind staff about the open enrollment coming up to make changes to their health insurance benefits. Open enrollment is from June 27 to July 9. More information will be sent regarding open enrollment later.

Q: Is the EAP program is a free service or paid by UHD?

A: It is a system-wide contract so the universities pay for it but it is free for the employee.

Ms. Smith make a couple of notes on the EAP services like the moving services and the wealth of mental health services available which right now can be helpful, especially during these trying times.

Ms. Smith also comments on the estate planning and Simple Will services since it is her opinion that one is never too young to be prepared for anything that could happen.

Ms. Smith thanks Ms. Morales once more.

THE EDGE AWARD

Ms. Smith announces and congratulates the May recipient of the EDGE Award, **Gerrelyn Davidson**, Department Business Administrator II, Student Success & Student Life. Ms. Davidson will be attending

the College Accounting and Business Operation Workshop or CABOW. It is a comprehensive workshop that features a robust program on higher education accounting standards and practices.

Ms. Smith reminds staff to apply for the EDGE AWARD through the Staff Council website. \$500 can go a long way toward professional development.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ms. Smith continues the meeting and presents the upcoming events.

- **UHD High Art Exhibition**
Wednesday, May 14 - 21, 2022
10:00 AM – 5:00 PM | O’Kane Gallery | Open Monday – Friday
This is an exhibition of art from the Houston area High School students. Ms. Smith invites staff to go and enjoy the exhibition
- **GatorLEADER Workshop: Cross-Cultural Communication**
Friday, May 20, 2022 | 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM | Zoom | <https://cglink.me/2fR/r1586233>
- **Sports & Fitness Award Banquet**
Saturday, May 21, 2022 | 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM | A300
- **Discovery Green Concert Series**
Thursdays | 7:00 PM | Discovery Green
Concerts in the series will be held every Thursday evening and will showcase a range of talents, from rock, pop, rap, and Latin to Tejano music.
- **Presidential Investiture**
Tuesday, May 24, 2022 | 10:00 AM, Ceremony at the Wortham Center | 12:30 PM, Lunch celebration on South Deck | 5:30 PM, Alumni & Friends Celebration the Four Seasons Hotel
- **Staff Council Elections**
Opens 2nd Monday in June, closes 4th Monday in June
*Must be benefits-eligible, in good standing, with at least 1 year tenure
*Administrative staff (assistant and associate deans, deans, executive directors, assistant and associate vice presidents, vice presidents, and the University President) in ineligible
Start thinking about who you would like to nominate!

Ms. Smith invites staff to nominate someone to run for a Staff Council Executive Committee position or to nominate yourself.

GENERAL UPDATES/RESPONSES TO ONLINE FORMS

Ms. Smith introduces Ms. Turnquest to go over questions, comments, or concerns submitted by staff via the SC website forms.

Question: Will there be more discussions with staff about the Market Survey? Many were negatively affected by this.

Response: If this concern is reference to the market study, no, there are no plans to discuss it further as no one was impacted negatively. Salary adjustments were distributed as follows:

◇ Minimum - 202 staff received a salary increase to bring them up to the minimum of their new pay grade for a total of \$686,330.

◇ Compression increase - Of the 202 Staff employees that received an increase to bring them up to the new minimum, 188 also received a compression adjustment. A total of \$311,249. An additional 150 staff employees received a compression adjustment for a total of \$310,448. In summary, 338 employees received compression adjustments for a grand total of \$621,697.

◇ Police - 21 UHDPD employees received adjustments in the amount of \$112,802

◇ **Grand Total - 373 staff received salary adjustments for a total of \$1,420,829**

If you have a more specific question about your case, please reach out to ESO directly.

Question: Is it possible to have a professional/mental day for staff?

Response: Yes and no.

NO – State of Texas agencies have no professional/mental health days available to employees.

YES – Staff may apply for Wellness Leave, which provides 8 hours of leave per year to be used for any purpose. To qualify for Wellness Leave, employees must complete an approved online Health Risk Assessment (HRA) and receive an annual comprehensive physical exam. Procedures for applying for Wellness Leave may be found in PS 02.B.13, Employee Wellness Program Policy.

YES – Staff may qualify to use sick leave if they meet the policy conditions. By policy, “Sick leave with pay may be taken when sickness, injury, or pregnancy and confinement prevent the employee’s performance of duty...”

YES – If the staff member is experiencing a high level of extreme stress, anxiety, and depression that rises to the level of a “serious health condition,” they may apply for extended leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). More information may be found via the link in the chat.

Concern: The grievance committee should be more involved in the outcome of the formal appeal process. The committee should be used for more than just a review of whether or not policy was violated. The purpose of the hearing and review of all the materials seem pointless if our opinions are not heard.

Response: The policy is very clear in the role of the Staff Hearing Panel—assessing whether University policy was violated when an adverse employment action takes place. Adverse employment actions are the following: written reprimand; suspension without pay; demotion; involuntary transfer to a different job classification; denial of promotion; or termination.

The Hearing Panel has an important undertaking: conducting a thorough review of the materials provided by both parties; conducting a hearing and listening to both parties’ cases; and deciding if the grievable employment action was arbitrary, unfair, or inconsistent with University policy and/or practice, providing the employee “a prompt, orderly, and fair review of his/her grievance.”

Question: Can the campus be closed for one day for staff.

Response: No. The campus (or a portion of the campus) can only be closed by the University President in the event of an emergency.

Question/Concern: There needs to be a discussion about the Travel Requests. After they received back from the Provost Office, they must be printed and walked to the travel office. Because of this, paperwork has gotten lost and must be resent. In addition, it causes delays as one must walk to the OMB to submit the request which takes more than 20 - 30 minutes. What is the justification for them even wanting a paper document?

Response: In order to accept electronic travel request, the process below should be followed.

- 1) Only fully approved travel request will be accepted and issued a Travel Request number. Documents that are not fully approved by all those needed, ex: supervisor, DBA, V.P., etc. will be denied back to the department for completion.
- 2) All Travel Request Copies will need to be emailed to the TRAVEL OFFICE Inbox to receive a valid clock in date for processing prior to the travel.
- 3) CC's copies emailed or sent to Denise Bland will not be accepted unless otherwise specified beforehand.
- 4) Please forward all documents to the Travel office email: travel@uhd.edu

There are many questions about travel request being accepted electronically. As of the day before this meeting all, the DBA received an email regarding procedures for accepting electronic travel requests. This information will be shared, and your DBA have the information about the procedures to accept travel request electronically.

GENERAL Q&A

Ms. Turnquest and Ms. Smith read and answer questions from attendees.

Q: Are we getting merit increases this upcoming year?

A: That has not been announced, as far as we know. We do not have an answer right now, but we can find out.

Q: When does summer attire will be appropriate for the office?

A: We believe that information comes from ESO and can follow up with Ms. Montalbano if there is a timeline or if that will be implemented this year. Typically, an announcement is made the last week of May so you should see something about it next week.

Q: Is there any formal way to ask leadership to reconsider if a position can be considered to work from home.

Ms. Smith ask Ms. Montalbano to address this question

A: Ms. Montalbano- the individual can appeal to their VP but remember these decisions were made at the Cabinet level and it is by position not individual. You cannot have and admin assistant in one division be approved, while the other admin assistants cannot work remotely so, the answer will most likely be no. Remember that this is a trial period. We are trying to see during the summer, how things work out. As explained before, we are going to review the policy every semester for the initial year so after the summer we will review and tweak the policy as needed, maybe even tweak the list of available positions and perhaps some of the positions that were not approved for hybrid or remote work will now be approved or some of the ones that are currently approved may no longer be approved. We just need to see how things function.

Q: Do we know if we will be informed if our VP signs alternative work arrangement form?

A: Ms. Montalbano- Well, of course the employee needs to know if they have been approved for hybrid or remote work. My assumption is if each VP is handling things different, whether the VP approves it or not, it will trickle down to the employee supervisor and the employee supervisor will inform the employee before June 1.

Q: When can we start creating conversation about approaches to accessibility on all grounds here on campus, website, Blackboard, PeopleSoft, signage around campus etc., maybe something grassroots? If there is interest from staff will Staff Council be able to spearhead this?

Ms. Smith indicates she is not quite sure what is being asked.

Ms. Turnquest posits that they are asking about an ad hoc committee to think about the different ways that the campus could be more accessible and a lot of different spaces. While Staff Council could be involved in that it is probably a conversation that also needs to include faculty, administrators, and others. Those conversations are happening but perhaps we could get more involved.

Ms. Montalbano adds that Laura Waits in University Relations is the Interim Executive Director for Marketing. She is working diligently with others in converting content in our website and Blackboard and so on to make the content accessible. So, you might want to reach out to Ms. Waits if an ad hoc committee could be formed.

Q: If you receive the compression pay to increase your salary for FY22 and FY23, is it possible for salary to decrease after the compression pay period?

A: Ms. Montalbano- These are based funded increases. If you got an increase in FY22 or compression increase in FY22 that was added to your base so the second half, will be paid to you in FY23 and added to your base. So, no, it will not be retracted.

Q: Who handles Public Information Act request at UHD?

A: Ms. Montalbano- Public Information Act requests are handled at the system level by the Office of General Council. Anyone wishing to make a Public Information Act request must go through the Office of General Council.

Q: If the department chair is your supervisor, are they also required to take the 3 hours of training for your alternative work arrangement to be approved?

A: Ms. Montalbano- Yes. Now, we enrolled only staff in the hour training. We did not enroll chairs, so we would need to know in advance who the Chair is so we can get them enrolled in the manager training.

Q: How will the staff member go about doing this, just email ESO?

A: Ms. Montalbano- Send me an email

Ms. Smith thanks Montalbano for being present and offering to answer questions. Ms. Smith then asks if there are more questions from staff.

C: Ms. Montalbano adds that there were two or three open forums when the consultants were on campus. Communications went out from ESO office and Ms. Montalbano wanted to make sure that everybody understands that no one was impacted negatively by the study. Ms. Montalbano goes over the results of the study that show that 373 staff received salary adjustment for a total of 1.5 million or close to 1.5 like mentioned earlier. Ms. Montalbano reiterates that **no one was disadvantaged** by the study but on the other hand, many received a salary adjustment because of it.

Ms. Smith asks if anybody has any more questions or anything else to share. No more questions from audience.

Ms. Smith is ready to adjourn the meeting but not before giving a shout out to all the graduates from the weekend. There were 800 graduates in each ceremony and everything went wonderfully.

Ms. Smith thanks everyone for attending the meeting and reminds them about Staff Council elections and with no more questions, comments, or concerns from the audience.

The meeting is adjourned at 10:44am.

Q&A Key:

Answer, Comment, Question



University of Houston
DOWNTOWN

DETERMINED.
DEDICATED.
DOWNTOWN.



STAFF COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MAY 2022

Presented by:



AGENDA

- 1) Approval of Meeting Minutes
- 2) Welcome New Staff Members
- 3) Staff Good News
- 4) ESO Chili Cook-Off Results
- 5) Gator Learning Opportunities
- 6) Deer Park EAP
- 7) EDGE Award
- 8) Upcoming Events
- 9) General Updates, Responses to Online Forms
- 10) General Q&A



APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Minutes distributed – any corrections?

- **Motion to accept minutes? Second?**
- **Minutes accepted**

WELCOME NEW GATORS!



- Antrechelle Dorsey, Manager, Social Media, Enrollment Management
- Armiti Rashidi, Project Coordinator, College of Business
- Gabriela Estrada, Accounts Payable Specialist I, Accounts Payable
- Timothy Solis, Success Advisor II, Undergraduate Admissions (*UHD Alum*)
- Heidi Rucoba, Admissions Counselor, Undergraduate Admissions (*UHD Alum*)
- Bill Kwon, Academic Advisor II, Sciences & Technology
- Maria Carrillo, Accounts Payable Specialist I, Accounts Payable
- Sadarion Cerf, Coordinator, Environmental Health & Safety
- John Wagner, Technology Trainer I, Technology Learning Services
- Heather Arriaga, Contact Center Representative, Enrollment Management (*UHD Alum*)
- Cassandra Millhouse, Financial Assistant III, Information Technology (*UHD Alum*)

STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Belinda Hernandez,
College Web Technical Support
Specialist, M. Davies College of
Business**



“On April 30th-May 1st, I rode my first MS150 bike ride from Energy Corridor to College Station. The route was a total of 180 miles.

This was such an amazing experience to be with my team and the MS organization over the weekend. I met so many people; some living with MS and hearing them say, thank you for doing this. It was a gratifying feeling to know that I am helping raise funds and research to find a cure for this disease.”





STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Loren Coleman,
Program Coordinator, Humanities
& Social Sciences**

“My family welcomed Logan James (Baby Lo) into the world in September 2021. The joy and happiness he has brought everyone he comes in contact with melts my heart. For such a little person he has such a huge personality!”

STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Heidi Rucoba,
Admissions Counselor, Undergraduate
Admissions**

“I love my two rescue tabby furbabies. Toro
(*brown*) and Meeko (*orange*)!”



STAFF GOOD NEWS

Submitted by Edith Arredondo,
Library Assistant, Library

Happy Mother's Day!





STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Krysti Turnquest,
Director, Accelerated Transfer
Academy**

Celebrating Mom, Maggie, & Zoe, and
graduation!





STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Linda Harris,
*Administrative Assistant I,
Facilities Management***



STAFF GOOD NEWS

Submitted by Erica
Skinner, *Technician/Web Support
Publications, Accelerated Transfer
Academy*



Celebrating my Mom (Lillie) and
daughter (Cassandra)



Me & my kids (Cassandra,
Kendrick, & Bobby)

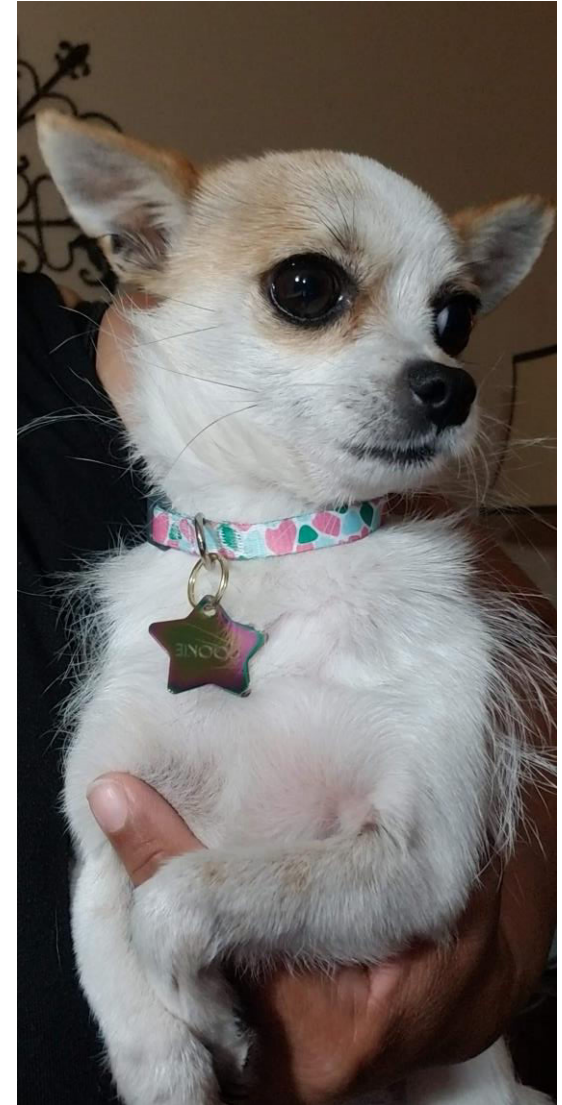


STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Erica Skinner,
Technician/Web Support Publications,
Accelerated Transfer Academy**

“Meet my granddaughter’s Chihuahua.

Her name is Cookie.”





STAFF GOOD NEWS

Submitted by Adam Valdez, *EHS Technician, Environmental Health & Safety*

“This is Willie Nelson Valdez. He is a 2 ½ year old German Shorthaired Pointer.”

STAFF GOOD NEWS

**Submitted by Thomas Ratliff,
*Contracts Supervisor, Facilities
Management***

Lunar Eclipse, May 15-16



ESO CHILI COOK-OFF RESULTS



16 teams participated & over 300 attended!

- **1st place – The Chili Enforcers – Sargent Cortez - UHDPD**
- **2nd place – Bad Rumor Cookers – Victor Landin – Student Team**
- **3rd place – Gator Bayou Cookers – Michael Manuel – Advancement & University Relations**
- **Best Décor – Gator Bayou Cookers – Michael Manuel – Advancement & University Relations**
- **People’s Choice Chili – SUC – Academic Advising**





Gator Learning Opportunities



- **Christian Purdy**, *Talent Development Specialist, Employment Services & Operations*

Gator Learning Emotional Intelligence

May 19, 2022 – ACAD A626 &
Zoom



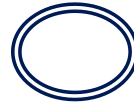
Deer Oaks Employee Assistance Program



- **Erica Morales**, *Director, Benefits & Compensation, Employment Services & Operations*



Agenda



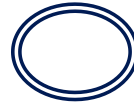
- What is EAP?
- Eligibility
- Types of Assistance
- Resources

EAP Purpose



- Variety of services to assist with resolving work and life issues
 - To live happier, healthier, more balanced lives
- 24/7 confidential services to assist with life's challenges
- Free of charge

Eligibility



- Full- and part-time benefits-eligible employees
- Employee dependents and household members
- Coverage continues for six (6) months post-employment



What does it Cover?



- Short-term Counseling
 - Stress, anxiety, grief, marital/family challenges, relationship issues, addiction, crisis management/trauma etc.
 - Three free counseling sessions per issue
 - Confidential

What does it Cover?

- Referral & Community Resources

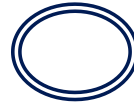
- Referrals to local community resources, member health plans, support groups, legal resources, and child/elder care/daily living resources

- Legal Assistance

- 30-minute consultations; 25% discount on hourly attorney fees
- Unlimited online access to legal resources, links, tools, and forms; and interactive online Simple Will preparation.

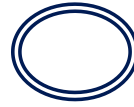


What does it Cover?



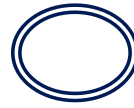
- **Financial Assistance**
 - Unlimited phone consultations
 - Advice on a range of financial issues, such as, bankruptcy prevention, debt reduction, financial planning, and identity theft
 - Unlimited online access to a wealth of educational financial resources, links, tools, and forms

What does it Cover?



- Alternative Modes of Support
 - Life Coaching
 - Stress reduction sessions
 - Virtual group counseling
- Work-Life Services
 - Daily living resources such as locating pet sitters, event planners, home repair contractors, tutors, travel planning, and moving services.

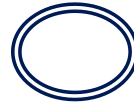
What does it Cover?



- Child & Elder Care Referrals
 - Assists with searching for the licensed child and eldercare facilities
 - Searchable databases
- Ride Reimbursement Program
 - Reimburses for cab, Lyft and Uber fares if incapacitated due to substance or extreme emotional condition
 - Once per year, max of \$45.00



Resources



- Toll-free Helpline: 1-888-993-7650
- I-ConnectYou (App)
 - Supports telephonic or video calls, IM, SMS, video and articles
 - Answered 24/7
 - iOS and Android
 - Registration code 230182
 - Username/password: UHD
- Website www.deeroakseap.com
 - Username/password: UHD
- Email: eap@deeroaks.com

The EDGE

Educational/Development Grant for Employees
Sponsored by the University of Houston-Downtown Staff Council

May Recipient



Gerrelyn Davidson,
*Department Business
Administrator II, Student
Success & Student Life*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **UHD High Art Exhibition**

Wednesday, May 14 - 21, 2022
10:00 AM – 5:00 PM | O’Kane Gallery
Open Monday – Friday

- **GatorLEADER Workshop: Cross-Cultural Communication**

Friday, May 20, 2022
3:00 PM - 5:00 PM | Zoom
<https://cglink.me/2fR/r1586233>

- **Sports & Fitness Award Banquet**

Saturday, May 21, 2022
6:00 PM – 8:30 PM | A300

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Discovery Green Concert Series**

Thursdays | 7:00 PM | Discovery Green

Concerts in the series will be held every Thursday evening and will showcase a range of talents, from rock, pop, rap, and Latin to Tejano music.



- **Presidential Investiture**

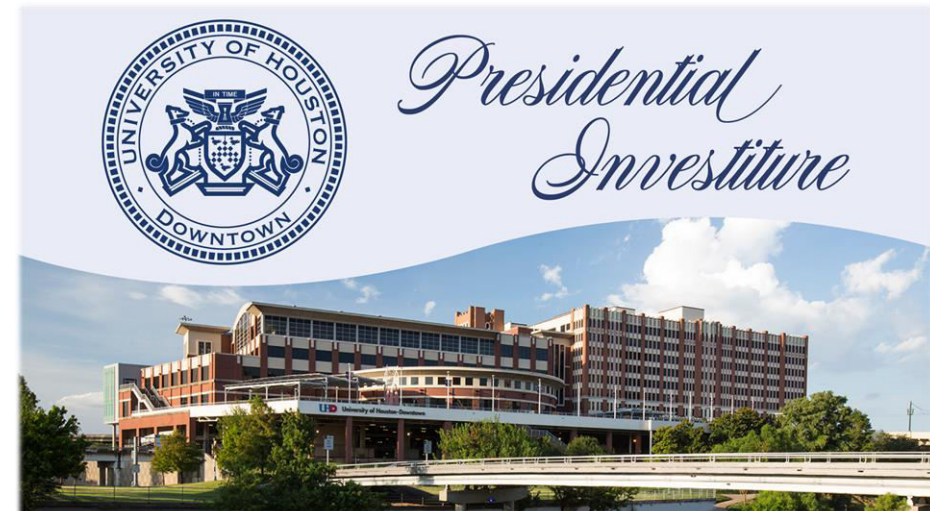
Tuesday, May 24, 2022

10:00 AM, Ceremony at the Wortham Center

12:30 PM, Lunch celebration on South Deck

5:30 PM, Alumni & Friends Celebration the

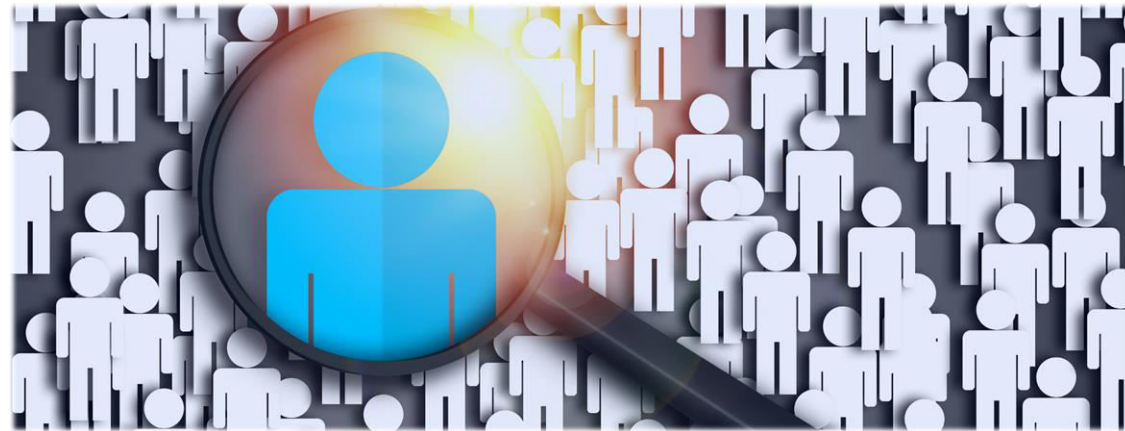
Four Seasons Hotel



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Staff Council Elections**

- Opens 2nd Monday in June, closes 4th Monday in June
- Must be benefits-eligible, in good standing, with at least 1 year tenure
- Administrative staff (assistant and associate deans, deans, executive directors, assistant and associate vice presidents, vice presidents, and the University President) in ineligible
 - *Start thinking about who you would like to nominate!*



An aerial photograph of a city skyline at dusk. The sky is a mix of light blue and orange. Numerous skyscrapers are visible, some with lights on. In the foreground, there are parking lots with cars and some lower-rise buildings. A large, white, semi-transparent circular graphic is positioned on the right side of the image, partially overlapping the skyline.

GENERAL UPDATES / RESPONSES TO ONLINE FORMS

RESPONSES TO ONLINE FORMS

Question: Will there be more discussions with staff about the Market Survey?

Response: If this concern is reference to the market study, no, there are no plans to discuss it further as no one was impacted negatively. Salary adjustments were distributed as follows:

→ Minimum - 202 staff received a salary increase to bring them up to the minimum of their new pay grade for a total of \$686,330.

→ Compression increase - Of the 202 Staff employees that received an increase to bring them up to the new minimum, 188 also received a compression adjustment. A total of \$311,249. An additional 150 staff employees received a compression adjustment for a total of \$310,448. In summary, 338 employees received compression adjustments for a grand total of \$621,697.

→ Police - 21 UHDPD employees received adjustments in the amount of \$112,802

→ **Grand Total - 373 staff received salary adjustments for a total of \$1,420,829**

STAFF COUNCIL SUGGESTIONS

Question: Is it possible to have a professional/mental day for staff?

Response: Yes and no.

NO – State of Texas agencies have no professional/mental health days available to employees.

YES – Staff may apply for Wellness Leave, which provides 8 hours of leave per year to be used for any purpose. To qualify for Wellness Leave, employees must complete an approved online Health Risk Assessment (HRA) and receive an annual comprehensive physical exam. Procedures for applying for Wellness Leave may be found in PS 02.B.13, Employee Wellness Program Policy.

YES – Staff may qualify to use sick leave if they meet the policy conditions. By policy, “Sick leave with pay may be taken when sickness, injury, or pregnancy and confinement prevent the employee’s performance of duty...”

YES – If the staff member is experiencing a high level of extreme stress, anxiety, and depression that rises to the level of a “serious health condition,” they may apply for extended leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). More information may be found via the link in the chat.

RESPONSES TO ONLINE FORMS

Concern: The grievance committee should be more involved in the outcome of the formal appeal process. The committee should be used for more than just a review of whether or not policy was violated. The purpose of the hearing and review of all the materials seem pointless if our opinions are not heard.

Response: The policy is very clear in the role of the Staff Hearing Panel—assessing whether University policy was violated when an adverse employment action takes place. Adverse employment actions are the following: written reprimand; suspension without pay; demotion; involuntary transfer to a different job classification; denial of promotion; or termination.

The Hearing Panel has an important undertaking: conducting a thorough review of the materials provided by both parties; conducting a hearing and listening to both parties' cases; and deciding if the grievable employment action was arbitrary, unfair, or inconsistent with University policy and/or practice, providing the employee “a prompt, orderly, and fair review of his/her grievance.”

RESPONSES TO ONLINE FORMS

Question: Can the campus be closed for one day for staff.

Response: No. The campus (or a portion of the campus) can only be closed by the University President in the event of an emergency.

RESPONSES TO ONLINE FORMS

Question/Concern: There needs to be a discussion about the Travel Requests. After they received back from the Provost Office, they must be printed and walked to the travel office. Because of this, paperwork has gotten lost and must be resent. In addition, it causes delays as one must walk to the OMB to submit the request which takes more than 20 - 30 minutes. What is the justification for them even wanting a paper document?

Response: In order to accept electronic travel request, the process below should be followed.

1. Only fully approved travel request will be accepted and issued a Travel Request number. Documents that are not fully approved by all those needed, ex: supervisor, DBA, V.P., etc. will be denied back to the department for completion.
2. All Travel Request Copies will need to be emailed to the TRAVEL OFFICE Inbox to receive a valid clock in date for processing prior to the travel.
3. CC's copies emailed or sent to Denise Bland will not be accepted unless otherwise specified beforehand.
4. Please forward all documents to the Travel office email: travel@uhd.edu

GENERAL Q&A



University of Houston
DOWNTOWN



DETERMINED. DEDICATED. DOWNTOWN.



DEER OAKS EAP SERVICES

Discover Your EAP + Work-Life Benefit

Employee Assistance Program

The Deer Oaks Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free service provided for you, your dependents, and household members by your employer. This program offers a wide variety of counseling, referral, and consultation services, which are all designed to assist you and your family in resolving work and life issues in order to live happier, healthier, more balanced lives. From stress, addiction, and change management, to locating child care facilities, legal assistance, and financial challenges, our qualified professionals are here to help. These services are completely confidential and can be easily accessed 24/7, offering you around-the-clock assistance for all of life's challenges.

- ✔ **Program Access:** You may access the EAP by calling the toll-free Helpline number, using our iConnectYou App, or instant messaging with a work-life consultant through our online instant messaging system.
- ✔ **Telephonic Assessments & Support:** In-the-moment telephonic support and crisis intervention are available 24/7 along with intake and clinical assessments.
- ✔ **Short-term Counseling:** Counseling sessions with a qualified counselor to assist with issues such as stress, anxiety, grief, marital/family challenges, relationship issues, addiction, etc. Counseling is available via structured telephonic sessions, video, and in-person at local provider offices.
- ✔ **Referrals & Community Resources:** Our team provides referrals to local community resources, member health plans, support groups, legal resources, and child/elder care/daily living resources.
- ✔ **Advantage Legal Assist:** Free 30 minute telephonic or in-person consultation with a plan attorney; 25% discount on hourly attorney fees if representation is required; unlimited online access to a wealth of educational legal resources, links, tools and forms; and interactive online Simple Will preparation.
- ✔ **Advantage Financial Assist:** Unlimited telephonic consultation with an Accredited Financial Counselor qualified to advise on a range of financial issues such as bankruptcy prevention, debt reduction, financial planning, and identity theft; supporting educational materials available; unlimited online access to a wealth of educational financial resources, links, tools and forms (i.e. tax guides, financial calculators, etc.).
- ✔ **Alternate Modes of Support:** Your EAP offers support alternatives in addition to traditional short-term counseling including telephonic life coaching, AWARE stress reduction sessions, and virtual group counseling. During your call with one of our counselors, ask if these programs would be right for you.
- ✔ **Work-life Services:** Our work-life consultants are available to assist you with a wide range of daily living resources such as locating pet sitters, event planners, home repair, tutors, travel planning, and moving services. Simply call the Helpline for resource and referral information.
- ✔ **Child & Elder Care Referrals:** Our child and elder care specialists can help you with your search for licensed child and elder care facilities in your area. They will discuss your needs, provide guidance, resources, and qualified referral packets. Searchable databases and other resources are also available on the Deer Oaks member website.
- ✔ **Take the High Road Ride Reimbursement Program:** Deer Oaks reimburses members for their cab, Lyft and Uber fares in the event that they are incapacitated due to impairment by a substance or extreme emotional condition. This service is available once per year per participant, with a maximum reimbursement of \$45.00 (excludes tips).



CONTACT US:

Toll-Free: (888) 993-7650



Website: www.deeroakseap.com

Email: eap@deeroaks.com

