Six staff members earn CARE Award

UTD President David Daniel and several administrators recently honored this semester’s CARE Award winners, acknowledging six staff members who have demonstrated superior performance.

Chris Cody, Connie Imhof, Jay Jascott, J. Howard Medlock, Reena Schellenberg and Debbie Sauer received CARE Awards during a ceremony on Nov. 27. The award is given to staff members who have provided exceptional customer service and performed acts that enhanced the image of the university.

“I was shocked, but very honored, to be a recent recipient of the prestigious CARE Award,” said Debbie Sauer, an administrative services officer in Facilities Management. “It is extremely exciting to be a part of such phenomenal growth and amazing transformation unfolding on the UTD campus.”

From left: Reena Schellenberg, J. Howard Medlock, Debbie Sauer, Chris Cody, Jay Jascott and Connie Imhof earned CARE Awards, presented by UTD President Dr. David Daniel.

A maximum of six staff members can receive the award during a single semester. The award is presented twice a year and is considered a lifetime honor, as staff may only win one CARE Award during their tenure with the university.

Fellow staff, faculty, students, customers and visitors can nominate staff for the award. The Staff Council will announce dates and deadlines for the spring nominations in the February SUN newsletter. Nomination forms can be found on the Staff Council website at utdallas.edu/staffcouncil.

“I am honored to receive the CARE Award. It is so enjoyable to work at UTD in Executive Education and have the support of my colleagues.”

Connie Imhof; JSOM

“It means a great deal to me to be recognized for my efforts, none of which could be accomplished without the support of fellow employees and students.”

J. Howard Medlock; A&H

“I feel like I was simply doing what needed to be done as part of my job. I strive to give students and patrons the best experience at the Activity Center.”

Chris Cody; Activity Center

“Thank you, Dr. Daniel, Rick Dempsey, Staff Council and many others, for the award, kind words and warm, heartfelt congratulations that I received from each of you.”

Debbie Sauer; Facilities

Staff Council roster set; committees get to work

The University Staff Council welcomed the addition of newly elected representatives in September and quickly appointed all members to one of four committees for the fiscal year.

The council re-elected Rochelle Peña to serve as president for 2012-13, while J. Howard Medlock assumed the role of vice president. Jay Jascott will serve as chair of the benefits committee; Chad Thomas will chair the communications committee; Paula Austell will chair the fundraising committee; and Arturo Elizondo will chair the staff development committee.
Austell said the fundraising committee delivered 144 plants as part of its annual holiday poinsettia and cacti sale, thanks in large part to the office of UTD President Dr. David Daniel, which purchased poinsettias to decorate December graduation ceremonies and other holiday events.

The holiday plant sale is the first of several key fundraising events that benefit the Staff Council and helps grow the council’s scholarship fund, which provides financial assistance to staff members pursuing higher education at UT Dallas. Fundraising events will recommence in the spring semester.

“We’re looking forward to our upcoming Valentine Candy/Bear sales in February,” Austell said.

The Staff Council’s staff development committee and the Office of Administration sponsored the Staff Appreciation Fall Fling on Thursday, Nov. 29.

Elizondo said approximately 300 staff attended the event, where staff members were encouraged to bring canned food items to help stock the Comet Cupboard. As an incentive, staff members were given one raffle ticket for each item they donated. Thanks to the generosity of the staff, Elizondo said his committee collected approximately 176 items for the Comet Cupboard. Luisa Sanchez of Facilities Management also won a $25 Target gift card and an Italian food gift basket in the raffle.

Thanks in part to the efforts of the benefits committee, staff members now may use the 40-plus faculty lounges located across campus for lunch breaks and relaxation.

In meetings earlier this year, several Staff Council members asked whether the faculty lounges could be opened up to staff. After conducting a straw poll of the faculty on the matter, faculty expressed they were sympathetic to the request and enthusiastic in their support. The only reason staff had not been provided access before, Staff Council President Peña explained, is likely because no one had asked.

Dean Mark Spong announced the news in an email in September that the faculty lounge in ECSS 3.502 will now be the ECS Faculty and Staff Lounge.

Employees should note that if a staff member is requesting access to a lounge in a specific building that has key or card access, that staff member must obtain approval from the department head and have a card or key Request submitted by that department. For security reasons, the rooms will still be maintained with controlled access to faculty and staff. According to Daniel Calhoun with the UTD Police Department, the only lounges requiring card access as of now are in the ECS building; all others are normal key access.

Faculty and staff alike are asked to keep all lounges neat and tidy.

For Staff Council members' contact information, click the Representatives link at utdallas.edu/staffcouncil.
Staff Council Interview

Dr. Calvin Jamison

Dr. Calvin Jamison came to UT Dallas in 2007 and currently serves as the university’s vice president for administration. He oversees a variety of development projects, and multiple sections of the university report to his office, including Facilities Management, Human Resources, UTD Police, Procurement and EH&S.

Every day we continue to enhance the culture, grow the campus and build a legacy; and being a part of that is very exciting.

It’s no coincidence the walls of Calvin Jamison’s office are decorated with large framed photographs of UT Dallas’ recently completed and most ambitious building projects.

Since his arrival as the vice president of business affairs, and now as the VP for administration, Jamison has helped spearhead a variety of campus enhancement projects that include the award-winning Student Services Building, the Visitors Center that administrators proudly call the “gateway to the university” and the campus mall, lined with reflection pools and majestic magnolias.

The framed photographs of these and other developments serve as reminders of recent achievements in Jamison’s successful decades-long leadership career — one that began in a small town in southern Virginia.

A native of Martinsville/Henry County, a burg of about 30,000 at the feet of the Appalachians, Jamison grew up a scholar and a standout athlete. In addition to his spot as the starting quarterback for the football team at Laurel Park High School, he was a shooting guard for the basketball team, a starting pitcher in baseball and a successful discus thrower in track and field.

Academics and athletics provided the motivation for Jamison to push through his final two years at Laurel Park High. The fifth of six children, his mother died giving birth to his youngest brother when he was just 3. He was raised by a stepmother and grandmother, who also passed very early in his life. Jamison spent the last two years of high school on his own in Martinsville, earning his diploma while being recruited by nearby Virginia Tech.

Knee injuries forever sidelined his football career, but his academic career flourished. In a 10-year span, Jamison earned his bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees from Virginia Tech. He spent the latter part of those 10 years cutting his teeth in higher education, working first as the university’s assistant director of admissions and later as the assistant to the president.

In that time, he learned the ropes in university governance, admissions, and faculty and staff relations. In assisting the athletics office, he helped recruit stars including NFL Hall of Fame defensive end Bruce Smith and 16-year NBA star Dell Curry to play for the Hokies.

After stints at Virginia Commonwealth University and private sector work with the Ethyl Corporation, Jamison spent six years as the city manager for Richmond, Va., the capitol city of about 200,000. There, he worked to increase the city’s bond rating three times, led the push to finance and build a $170 million convention center and helped oversee the development of Richmond’s first upscale shopping mall. Citizen satisfaction rose from 43 percent to 80 percent with Jamison at the managerial helm.

Jamison returned to higher education in 2005 as the senior vice president at Hampton University before he was recruited to UT Dallas, which he joined in 2007.

These days, he can be found in the gym every morning at 5 a.m. for his daily workout. He shares stories and anecdotes often and is quick to champion the university and what he describes as its spirit of excellence that is made possible by one factor in particular: attitude.

“One cannot always control what happens to you,” he said, “however, you can control how you respond — maintaining a positive attitude is the first step to creating winning results.”

Q1: You’ve been with the university for more than five years now. What are you most proud of in that time you’ve been an administrator?

Overall, I am proud of the great team of people that I work with and what we’ve been able to accomplish. I am proud of being a part of the largest and most endearing legacy of growth in the history of The University of Texas at Dallas.

In addition to new buildings and landscaping projects, we have been part of the change to a strong focus on service excellence, process redesign and lean efforts. We have created a spirit, attitude and excitement on this campus that is nothing short of phenomenal, and more importantly, it’s contagious. In addition, we have developed strong “Town &

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Gown” relationships with the community, which is important for a growing university.

Q2: The university has experienced tremendous growth over the past decade. Which projects or developments during that time have you been most excited to see come to fruition?

There is not just one project, since each have their own unique personality. The construction of the first residence hall and dining facility forever changed the undergraduate experience. Dr. Darrelene Rachavong and her team have worked closely with us to assure the programming reflected a special experience for students in learning communities. We are working on residence halls four and five and will have 2,200 students located where an old driving range once called home. The landscape project (planting 5,000 trees and adding reflecting pools) created an environment where students want to spend more time, transforming the campus into more enjoyable social and academic space.

The Student Services Building was particularly exciting because of the focus on sustainability and energy efficiency; becoming the first LEED Platinum certified building in higher education in Texas. It has been the recipient of seven awards to date. The ATEC building is an iconic building that changes the mall and compliments the SSB. The Visitors Center and University Bookstore serve as the gateway building to the university, providing the initial first impressions of the campus.

Q3: What projects or developments are on the horizon that staff members, in particular, should look forward to?

There are a number of great projects on the horizon. There is the Jindal School of Management addition of 110,000 square feet, with a proposed Jason’s Deli, a 220,000-square-foot Bioengineering and Sciences Building and a parking garage on the north of campus with 15,000 square feet of retail/office space and a proposed Einstein’s Bagel. In addition, we have a 600-bed residence hall, dining facility and recreational space being constructed with occupancy scheduled for fall 2014. We are also building 10 new tennis courts and will continue to enhance our commitment to staff appreciation, wellness, flu shots and corporate challenge — all of which continue to enhance the quality of life for our campus.

Q4: Parking and dining always seem to be hot topics for students, but staff members also pay close attention to changes in those areas. Should we expect any changes or expansions in coming months?

As I mentioned, we will have the addition of a new dining facility with over 650 new seats and additional retail on other parts of campus. We added the Comet Food Truck, and we continue to look for opportunities to enhance the dining experience across campus. With parking, we have added over 700 new parking spaces this year with an additional 1,500 scheduled for 2013. In addition, the very popular “Comet Cabs” are allowing us to move people from the residence halls and the extended parking lots to the center of campus.

We have also added five new buses and they will now be equipped with WI-FI and GPS, thus tracking their location as they navigate the campus.

Q5: You and your staff have laid the groundwork for the planned “Comet Town” multiuse development. What can you tell us about that project at this time?

The “Comet Town” project will be part of a larger transit-oriented development which ultimately is the proposed location of a new DART station. Of immediate interest, we are developing approximately 10 acres along Synergy for the purpose of building a mixed-used development of residential, restaurants, retail and entertainment catering to the college experience. We are conducting market analysis and completing a request for qualifications and proposals from outside developers.

Q6: As a longtime Virginia resident, have you adjusted to the Texas life (culture, weather, pride, etc.)?

I have enjoyed my transition to Dallas and to the warmer weather in Texas. I am a golfer, so the warm weather is a positive contribution to the quality of life. (Smiling) There was a period of adjustment to the famous Texas plains, and I like to believe that part of the reason why UT Dallas planted 5,000 trees on campus was to help make me and others feel more at home.

Q7: What motivates you to come to work at UT Dallas every day?

UT Dallas is a special place. I often share with people that there are a lot of places one can work; however, there are very few places one can leave a legacy. Every day we continue to enhance the culture, grow the campus, and build a legacy; and being a part of that is very exciting.

There are great individuals on this campus who care deeply about the impact they are making on so many lives. We have created a fast-paced, winning attitude at UT Dallas, which is extraordinarily energizing. We have a high-energy President in Dr. David Daniel and we have accomplished a lot in a very short time frame. But what is really exciting is that the best is yet to come. Therefore you might want to buckle up because we are about to move to warp speed, called Tier One and beyond!
On Dec. 3, UT Dallas President David Daniel hosted a President’s Coffee with a small group of staff. The gathering afforded those present a chance to have an informal conversation with the president on a number of subjects.

- Dr. Daniel began the conversation discussing new developments on campus, namely the new Arts & Technology building. He said he is excited about the vibe the building is bringing to the campus. Dr. Daniel said enrollment is up 4 percent, which is a good, stable increase. He said he wants enrollment growth to be steady so that the university is able to keep pace in adding new facilities.

- Dr. Daniel spoke about “Comet Town,” a planned mixed-use development currently in the early planning phase. He said the project — under the guidance of Vice President for Administration Dr. Calvin Jamison — is definitely still on the table. “I have told him to move aggressively” forward with it, Dr. Daniel said.

- Attendees told Dr. Daniel that there can be a disconnect between staff on campus and asked how they can connect with one another to be more efficient at their jobs. Dr. Daniel explained that it is a common issue and that he would like to see suggestions from staff to help with the concern. He agreed that there can be room for improvement and said the News Center could be utilized more to relay information to staff.

- Asked how UT Dallas can better connect with the surrounding community and engage residents, Daniel said there have been past projects aimed at community engagement such as Sounds of Class, but some projects did not work long term because of the amount of time and money required. He suggested the Staff Council establish a subcommittee composed of staff members who are also Richardson residents, tasked with developing community-oriented events.

- Commencement fell rather early this semester because the university had two possible dates to choose from — Dec. 7-8 or Dec. 21-22. The university chose the former, allowing UTD to make Dec. 21 a holiday. Winter Break is Dec. 21, 2012-Jan. 1, 2013.

In attendance:

- Pia Jakobsson
  Arts and Humanities
  Graduate Advisor

- Amber Miles
  Arts and Humanities
  Undergraduate Advisor

- Stevan Byrd
  Facilities
  Grounds

- Charles Vincent
  Arts and Humanities
  Web Developer

- Kecia Baker
  Student Development
  Assistant Dean of Students

- Janie Shipman
  Career Center
  Counseling Specialist
The Staff Council and the Office of Administration sponsored the Staff Appreciation Fall Fling on Thursday, Nov. 29. Approximately 300 staff joined us for an afternoon break with sweet treats and a warming drink. An ice-breaker bingo game allowed attendees to get to know their colleagues better. A photo booth was also set up to allow staff an opportunity to get a picture with their friends and colleagues.