MLK Event Promotes Diversity and Inclusiveness

"Embrace diversity and foster student engagement in the global community." — A goal of Student Development and Enrollment Services

Many UCF events, workshops and programs are created with UCF’s fourth goal in mind, “to become more inclusive and diverse.” The annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration, hosted by the Multicultural Student Center (MSC), was one of those initiatives. The celebration began with the UCF Gospel Choir singing as they led the march from Memory Mall to the Reflecting Pond in honor of MLK. The walk was a time for the UCF community to come together and reflect on the Dream and the progress that has been made toward achieving that Dream. Many students, faculty and staff joined in the march prior to reaching the final destination, the Reflecting Pond. More people gathered to hear MLK’s famous speech, “I Have a Dream,” which was read by Bryan Arnette, African American Student Union (AASU). Following the reading, Khalisha Williams, member of the AASU, presented an inspiring VIP (Vision, Inspire, Pursuit) speech on the theme, “Where we stand, where we should be.” (See excerpt from Williams’ speech below.)

“Martin Luther King Jr. was a visionary of his time and the goal of this MSC program was to make sure that his vision was not forgotten,” said Andretta Williams, MSC student director. “I feel that the students who touched them by his timeless words and will continue living his dream.”

Today we stand in remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr., his Dream. Something that makes MLK so important is that he was VIP of his era. VIP meaning he did that something extra in life to make him leave a legacy. I think a major part of his Dream was for us today as individuals to want to be VIPs and make a difference.

• V-Visions: Taking the time to examine yourself and your environment, and discover your divine purpose and dream. What you would want the world to be or the legacy you wish to leave and strive to make it happen.

• I-Inspire: Inspire yourself and others with your dream. There is something about witnessing someone doing what they were put on this earth to do.

• P-Pursuit: Constantly be in pursuit of your vision; never rest. Never be afraid of failure or setbacks. Accepting what is happening and accepting the risks for one to truly appreciate success.

UCF is one of 18 campuses selected to form the Core Commitments Leadership Consortium: Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility, AUCU calls on students, faculty, and staff—individuals, to measure the impact of existing efforts. The results will be used to shape future work at each institution and the consortium.

Along with other UCF administrators and faculty, Patricia MacKown, assistant vice president for Campus Life and the College of Medicine, attended the conference to aid in the planning of the new College of Medicine scheduled to commence in 2009. She will also support the new College of Medicine scheduled to commence in 2009. She will also support the new College of Medicine scheduled to commence in 2009. She will also support the new...
Enhancing the Sophomore Experience

The Sophomore Center (Student Success Center) is in the process of establishing a Sophomore Student Advisory Council (SSAC), and the center is looking for sophomores to share their university experience. The SSAC will serve as a resource for the sophomore student population to voice their concerns and needs as a way to enhance the overall sophomore experience. If SDES staff knows of any sophomore student(s) that might be interested in the SSAC, call 407.823.2231, or e-mail: sophomore@mail.ucf.edu.

Technology Connects UCF to Surrounding Communities - Off-Campus Students Will Benefit

Over the past year, Off-Campus Student Services (OCSS) has been connecting to the off-campus apartment communities through monthly meetings with the Community Bridge program. The Bridge is designed to promote a better connected off-campus community and to communicate information and events at UCF and their communities. In fall 2007, OCSS will present their newest service, the Community Bridge Web Portal. This interactive Web site will allow apartment managers in the UCF area to conveniently post events and promote activities that are happening in their communities. In addition, the site will feature UCF events and campus resources linking the off-campus students more closely with the university. For more information, e-mail: Jimmy Moore at: jmoore@mail.ucf.edu.

UCF Represented at National Tournament in Dallas

UCF was well represented at the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) national flag football tournament, held in Dallas, over the winter break with both teams and officials.

UCF’s Men’s “Showstoppers” and Women’s “Touchdown Here” teams both reached the Final 4 at the muddy NIRSA tournament in Dallas, falling short in the semi-finals. Brandon Baroody and Gia Castellino were named both to the All-Tournament Team, an award given to the top eight players in each division. Seven of the 75 total officials were from UCF as Vladimir Vourad, Donnie Barnes, Tom Eston, Sarah Crytter, Marissa Demirag, Rob Smyth, and Craig Menkes each officiated tournament games.

Rosen Welcomes Students

Rosen College of Hospitality Management students were welcomed back for the spring semester with the opportunity to take a photo sitting in a big chair on January 10.

“Students had a blast feeling like kids again,” said Tiffany Greenis, assistant director for Rosen Campus Life.

They even got to decorate their own picture frame.

Rosen Campus Life provided the Big Chair photos as well as markers, stick-on letters and cut-out shapes of animals, cars, sports, etc. to decorate the photo frames.

Revised GRE Soon To Be Available at Testing Center

The University Testing Center (UTC) is pleased to announce that the revised Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) General Test will be available beginning September 2007. Undergraduate students who are prospective graduate applicants take the GRE General Test as an admission requirement for many academic programs. The revised GRE General Test measures the verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking and analytical writing skills that have been acquired over a long period of time and that are not related to any specific field of study. Testing will be offered throughout the year on fixed test dates at least one time per month, with multiple administrations during peak months. For more information, visit: www.ets.org/gre.

Exercise is Good for Your Academics

Students who work out at the Recreation and Wellness Center (RWC) acquire more than just getting in shape.

Recently, the RWC evaluated the GPA of UCF undergraduate users and compared that with the overall usage at the RWC. As depicted in the chart, the more times students come into the gym, the higher their GPA is. Users who come more often have a higher GPA than the overall average at UCF.

FYAE Springs Up for Students in 2007

During the first week of classes, First Year Advising and Exploration (FYAE) held over 50 hours of walk-in appointments providing First-Time-In-College (FTIC) students the opportunity to meet with their assigned first-year advisor and make adjustments to their schedule. During that period, the advising team had 510 student contacts through walk-in appointments, outreach and e-mail. In addition, the advising team collaborated with the “Week of Welcome” tables and “POP” into the Student Success” outreach event.

FYAE Peer Advisors will present a workshop, “Saving my scholarship and my financial aid,” on February 28 in the Student Union. Additional outreach programs include eight advising programs, which are planned for the Orlando campus to assist students with course planning and scheduling. “Transit Workshops” will be facilitated by the FYAE peers this semester. For additional information, call 407.823.3789.

TTS Peers Promote Commitment and Retention

One of the challenges First-Time-In-College (FTIC) students have at a university is connecting to the campus community. Even for students who have already attended college for one or two years have difficulty establishing new campus connections. The Peer Mentors of Transfer and Transition Services (TTTS) have designed the Transfer Success Series to meet the needs of transfer students. A wide variety of topics will be covered in the series during the spring semester, including conflict management, study abroad programs and safe sex. The first of the eight workshops, to be held in February, will be about power studying techniques.

In addition, the TTTS Peers are creating a new student organization, Transfer Knights, a transfer student club that provides a social environment for transfer students. Transfer Knights will support students’ academic and professional goals and will promote retention and graduation. In addition, they will provide opportunities for learning valuable leadership and communication skills for networking to the rest of the UCF community by encouraging participation.

System Reduces Student Wait Time

As with each major term since fall 2001, the Registrar’s Office kicked-off the spring semester with Triage, a system intended to reduce wait times. Every employee of the Registrar’s Office took a turn at the front office doors, answering questions and guiding students to appropriate forms or other offices.

“We want to reserve services at the front desk for major issues,” said Sandra Bulger, assistant university registrar. Approximately 4,800 students received services over the course of seven days; issues ranged from grade forgiveness to changing majors.

The Registrar’s Office starts their Triage the Thursday before the first week of classes of each major term. In addition, they extend their normal office hours, opening at 8 a.m. each day and staying open until 7 p.m. most evenings during the first week of class. The Help Line and Registrar’s switchboard also stay open longer to deal with registration issues. “The system helps every employee to be aware of the issues our office faces,” said Bulger. “It takes a team effort.”

Students Make Major Decisions

A new UCF Policy for Undeclared Students was established in fall 2006 requiring students to declare a major prior to earning 45 college credit hours. Students are required to meet with an academic advisor (within SDES, the Colleges or regional campuses) to discuss their major exploration progress or to choose a major. A registration hold is placed on the records of the undeclared student population until they have contracted an academic advisor.

A university-wide Undeclared Policy Committee was convened through the Student Success Center to develop this new policy, formulate plans for communicating the policy to impacted students and establish an advising structure to provide assistance to the undeclared students with 45+ hours earned. During the fall, the Sophomore Center coordinated on-going communication (flyers, postcards, e-mails and phone calls) and tracked 335 undeclared hold students.

By the start of spring 2007, a total of 320 undeclared hold students (96%) had been advised (98% advised through the Sophomore Center) and their hold removed, with 82% of this population formally declaring a major and 89% of this population retained for the spring 2007 semester.

Some benefits of this new UCF policy for undeclared students include providing intentional and focused advising support services to students to thoughtfully explore their major/minor program options, and enhanced connections with many campus support services to assist in their major selection decision-making.
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FAYE Peer Advisors will present a workshop, "Saving my scholarship and my financial aid," on February 29 in the Student Union. Additional outreach programs include eight advising programs, which are planned for the Orlando campus to assist students with course planning and scheduling. "Transcript Workshop" will be facilitated by the FAYE peers this semester. For additional information, call 407-823-3789.
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“I feel that the students were touched by his timeless words and will continue living his dream,” said Andretta Williams.

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Never be afraid of failure or setbacks. Nothing worth having comes easy. Sometimes going to take disappointments and risks for one to truly appreciate success. MLK’s dream was not achieved in his lifetime, but it still lives on today— that is what matters.

I was once told that I was created because God scanned all the earth and found that no one could do what he needed me to do; so he created me to do it. So I urge all of us remember the Dream and be the VIP of our era.”

—Tykesia Williams

Student Development and Enrollment Services
Building collaborative partnerships that empower students to succeed!