RWC Showcases an Inclusive Environment

From Aqua Aerobics to quad rugby to wheelchair basketball, students and staff members participated in the Recreation and Wellness Center’s first-ever Adaptive Recreation Expo. The RWC partnered with the Multicultural Student Center, Student Disability Services, Student Government Association, and community members: Orlando Magic Wheels, Orange County Clash and Lighthouse Central Florida to facilitate a day-long event at the RWC featuring activities for students with disabilities.

The expo was held in conjunction with National Recreation Sports and Fitness Day. Students of all abilities participated in several events including group resistance training and Aqua Aerobics in the morning.

More than 20 students from Keiser University’s Occupational Therapy program took part in the morning sessions. Kim Tong, an OT Keiser student noted group resistance isn’t easy, “You have to have a lot of upper body strength to compensate for not having use of your legs.” Melissa Morgan, OT Keiser instructor and UCF alumna, was thrilled to take part in the Expo, "I’m really impressed with how accessible UCF is to people with disabilities. It’s an awesome facility.”

The afternoon session featured team-building exercises with the RWC’s Outdoor Adventure team, Goalball, quad rugby with the Orange County Clash and wheelchair basketball with the Magic Wheels. Kyle Coon, a UCF student who is blind, led participants in Goalball, a Paralympic sport for the visually impaired. The ball makes noise while in motion and you have to stop it from going into a goal similar to soccer. Coon, who lost his eyesight at the age of six, is an RWC Spin instructor and certified personal trainer. He believes the RWC’s adaptive and inclusive recreation program is fantastic — “We’re [RWC] on the path to doing what we want to do here. We want people to know there are many opportunities for people with disabilities.”

The Orange County Clash and Orlando Magic Wheels capped off the day of great events with sessions on how to play quad rugby and wheelchair basketball. Each team played a full period of their sports and then opened up play for students and participants at the Expo. RWC Fitness Coordinator Ashley Hathcock worked with the team of UCF offices and organizations to facilitate the event. “The Adaptive Recreation Expo was a huge accomplishment,” proclaimed Hathcock. “Over 200 students, staff and community members participated in the event. We achieved exactly what we set out to do with this program … to spotlight the adaptive recreational opportunities for students with disabilities. I feel that it was a great learning experience for everyone involved.”

RWC is funded by SGA. Comprehensive and diverse programs like Adaptive Recreation is part of the RWC’s mission and goals to continually enrich campus life and advance the UCF’s educational mission for all students.

For more information, contact ashley.hathcock@ucf.edu or visit: rwc.sdes.ucf.edu/programs/fitness/adaptive-recreation.

RWC Services Reach Across Campus

The Recreation and Wellness Center continues to keep up with the enrollment growth at UCF, the second largest university in the country. During late spring semester, RWC announced it was expanding its services to a center in the Knights Plaza. The creation of the facility coincides with the new 10-year contract signed by Matthew McCann, former Student Government Association president, and James Wilkening, director of the RWC. Wilkening says the expansion is part of the RWC’s continuing mission, “We are thrilled to be able to expand opportunities for the students to engage in healthy lifestyles.”

RWC at Knights Plaza will occupy 8,700 square-feet of space at the corner of the West Plaza Drive and Gemini Boulevard and is scheduled to open in fall 2012. It will offer students living in the North Towers adjacent to the arena the convenience of nearby recreation and exercise capabilities and serves as an alternative for the entire campus. The facility will feature strength and cardio equipment and a mind and body studio for less intense group exercise like yoga.

UCF’s Recreation and Wellness Center continuing mission is to enrich campus life through programs that foster healthy lifestyles.
Creating a Social Change at Devereux

LEAD Scholars and Volunteer UCF students teamed up to create social change. The group visited Devereux, an organization which provides residential care for boys 13-17 years of age with emotional, behavior, developmental problems, and hopes to create a better future for them. The students played different games with the boys and enjoyed their visit.

First year LEAD Scholar Todd Currie talked about the experience: “The goal of the field day was simply to make sure the boys at Devereux just had a great day and a lot of fun. From the minute we walked in, the boys came up and introduced themselves, had all kinds of questions and just wanted to hang out with us. College students coming for a visit is a big deal to them and they really do look up to us, and that is the biggest lesson I learned from our time at Devereux. I hope that in some way our presence helps the boys with their development and inspires them to want a better future.”

Importance of a Good Knights Sleep

On January 17, Health Services hosted a sleep program in the Hercules Community of Academic Village. More than 56 students attended to learn about the importance of sleep, how it affects their academic performance and how to achieve a better night’s sleep. The program was hosted by Kristina Grabnickas, advanced registered nurse practitioner, who specializes in sleep issues at the Health Center.

"Lack of sleep is a major impediment to student’s academic success," said Grabnickas. "It was great to take this program to the students so they can make changes and get into a healthy sleep routine."

Students walked away knowing how to set a sleep routine and common sleep impediments. One lucky winner went home with a “sleep aid basket,” full of items like relaxing music, sleep mask, ear plugs and more to help sleep more soundly. Educating students about the importance of sleep and its effect on their academic performance is an ongoing objective of Health Services.

Pageant Promotes Cultural Awareness

The UCF Asian Student Union organization was formed in 1987 under the direction of Karen Nguyen, program assistant for the Off-Campus Student Services and Neighborhood Relations. In 2000, the organization changed its name to Asian Student Association and the first Miss ASA Pageant was initiated.

The first pageant included students from UCF, University of Florida, University of South Florida, Rollins College and Stetson University, Valencia College, representing Vietnam, Thai, and China. The first Miss ASA pageant winner was Mai Linh Nguyen.

The program promotes culture awareness, unity among the Asian population, and educates others about their history, customs and traditions.

In 2002, the Miss ASA pageant become Mr. and Miss ASA Scholarship Pageant. As the program became more popular, it received more funding from UCF Student Government Association and business owners who support the program. The funding provided more category awards for both male and female contestants based on their academic achievement; friendliness; talent; photogenic appearance and service to the community.

The pageant has become an ASA tradition at UCF celebrating its 12th anniversary with 16 male and female contestants from UCF and Valencia College. The students represented the countries of China, India, Philippines and Vietnam.

Karen Nguyen, who continues to advise ASA, said: “I am proud to be a part of the organization contributing to the success of our students. They are very talented and hardworking in all areas encompassing their own academic achievement and their commitment to help each other to accomplish their goals and be successful in life and be proud of their heritage. ASA is the home for many students. I’ve seen how students who come from different ethnic backgrounds share their common interests. They share new ideas, learn from each other and are conscious of supporting others while working as a team to accomplish their mission. Each Asian country has their unique holidays and rich tradition to share and celebrate with others. This organization mirrors the values the UCF Creed: Integrity, Scholarship, Community, Creativity, and Excellence.”

Knight-Thon Raises $118,992.27 for the Children’s Miracle Network

Knight-Thon is UCF’s Dance Marathon benefitting the Children’s Miracle Network. The event is UCF’s largest student run philanthropy, and each year it has grown with participation and funds raised. In its 16th year, Knight-Thon passed the $100,000 mark.

Hundreds of students in over 60 student organizations fundraised year-round and it all led up to a Dance Marathon where participants stood on their feet for 16 hours in an effort to raise awareness and funds for Central Florida’s local Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals. The marathon challenges students to stay on their feet while keeping in mind sick children who are not able to stand.

Each hour a different type of music like country-western, rock and oldies kept students moving. Over 30 “moralers” moved about the participants offering support, snacks and each hour led a morale dance to keep everyone in high spirits.

All of the student’s hard work paid off. This year, Knight-Thon raised over $118,000 which was a 41 percent increase over the previous year. In addition participation was up by more than 35 percent.

With a new executive board already put in place, the organization is working hard to reach their 2012-13 goal of $170,000.

For more information about Knight-Thon, visit www.Knight-Thon.com. For The Kids We Are!
Students Honored with Prestigious Award

The Order of Pegasus recognizes exemplary performance by University of Central Florida undergraduate students in the areas of academic achievement, outstanding university involvement, leadership and community service. Graduate students are selected separately based on academic achievement, professional or community service, leadership, and publication or research experiences. Students are nominated annually by high ranking university officials. A separate selection committee reviews their credentials and interviews them. Because of the breadth of accomplishments required for this award, the Order of Pegasus is the most prestigious and significant student award that can be attained at the university.

The Order of Pegasus committee selected 25 students for the 2012 Order of Pegasus award. Each recipient was recognized with a medal and keepsake at the April 18 ceremony. Plaques of previous Order of Pegasus recipients may be viewed in the Order of Pegasus Lounge on the second floor of the Student Union. To view the Order of Pegasus 2012 recipients, visit: order.sdes.ucf.edu.

The Ultimate Knight Program Recognized

The Ultimate Knight orientation program, a 90-minute keynote student success presentation, has been recognized by the National Orientation Directors Association as the Region VI Innovative Program Award winner. This award recognizes innovative and effective approaches that help the universities meet the needs of incoming students.

The Office of First Year Experience’s Ultimate Knight program began in 2008 with a professional staff presenter and changed its format in 2010 to feature student presenters. These student presenters serve as peer educators by sharing stories, discussing hot topics on campus and engaging students in dialogue related to transition issues. The modern format also helps students to feel comfortable by playing music via Grooveshark, using Prezi as the presentation medium and incorporating several videos.

The presentation format and presenter dynamic educates students on how to Get Involved, Get Smart, Get Diversified, Get Real, Get Savvy, Get to Work, Get Healthy, and Get Global so that students can Get It All Together in their first year at UCF.

The Ultimate Knight student presenters are selected in the fall semester and go through intensive training and rehearsal for this presentation.

Cupcake Wars Benefit Children’s Miracle Network

The Panhellenic Council hosted their first “Cupcake Wars” to help raise money for Knight-Thon to benefit the Children’s Miracle Network. Participating organizations were asked to pay a $50 entry fee and bake 16 cupcakes representing the 16 years that UCF’s Knight-Thon event has taken place at UCF.

The judges included the Knight-Thon executive board members and three Miracle Children accompanied by their parents. The judges walked from table to table sampling and scoring all of the cupcakes. Then, the three Miracle Children shared their personal stories on the impact of Children’s Miracle Network. Lastly, the winners of the event were announced:

- 1st Place - Delta Delta Delta sorority
- 2nd Place - Phi Delta Epsilon
- 3rd Place - Alpha Xi Delta

The event raised $682.12 for Knight-Thon.
Panel Provides Insight to Medical Students

Aspiring medical and clinical students gained knowledge about careers in the healthcare field from a panel of UCF Health Services clinical staff. The event “Bagels and Lox with Docs” allowed students an informal setting in which they could ask a panel of healthcare providers about their careers.

The panel included doctors, an advanced registered nurse practitioner, registered nurse, physician assistant, pharmacist and dietician. In addition to the medical professionals, students were also able to address their academic concerns with an academic advisor from the Office of Pre-Professional Advising who specializes in pre-medical and pre-clinical advising.

“My favorite part of the event was being able to ask questions one-on-one with the health professionals that attended and hear their experienced advice,” Brittany Johnson, a Health Sciences Pre-Clinical major said. “It isn’t every day that students are able to interact with health professionals and ask them for their insight on questions that we have. This event proved to be an educational and enjoyable event.”

Health Services will continue to fulfill this mentoring role for students by hosting the event in the spring and fall semesters.

“As college health professionals, it is important that we not only care for our students physically and mentally, but that we help meet their academic needs as well,” said Dr. James Schaus, medical director of Health Services. “This event is one way we can further their academic progress by clearing up questions about our jobs and what it takes to achieve these positions.”

Goodnight Moon, a Fun Event

Late Knights, a free UCF monthly student-run alcohol alternative event, welcomed back students from winter break with its event, “Goodnight Moon.” Approximately 787 people attended the event in the Student Union, some in their PJs. The first 200 attendees received a pillow case on which they were able to imprint words they’d been called throughout their lives on the front. On the back, they were to do the opposite–write unpleasant words they’ve been called in their own handwriting on the front.

Activities included attendees racing around a track in bathtubs, battling it out in an inflatable dodge ball arena and playing air hockey. In the Atrium, students sang karaoke classics like “It’s Raining Men” and “Girls Just Want To Have Fun” which were received with applause.

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UCF Student Leaders Promote Bullying Awareness

The LEAD Scholars Program and Student Government Association came together to usher in change. Awareness was their goal; their mission was to bring to light an issue recently plaguing the country—bullying.

The repercussions of bullying—self-mutilation, self-hatred and suicide are what mobilized the groups to take action. They don’t want UCF to suffer through a suicide before it realizes that bullying is a serious issue on campus.

The students found it very humbling taking over the Student Union that day. They distributed blank T-shirts and had students write unpleasant words they’d been called throughout their lives on the front. On the back, they were to do the opposite—write positive aspects they loved about themselves. The message was simple: we all get bullied, but as a community we will overcome.

Freshman Tsiiena White commented, “Oftentimes students struggle to say positive things about themselves. We’re so quick to be hard on ourselves and point out our downfalls. The campaign was a great idea because it encouraged us to embrace our better halves.”

Forever an Eternal Knight

The UCF community honored the lives of 12 students who have passed away this year during the Eternal Knights Memorial Service on March 29. This ceremony enables families and friends to join with campus leaders and members of the UCF community in a solemn tribute to their loved ones.

Since not everyone was able to attend, all members of the UCF community were asked to honor the lives of those students we have lost this year by participating in a 24-second campuswide moment of silence at 3 p.m. (two seconds for each fallen Knight).

During the eulogy, each student is recognized and given the title Eternal Knight.

Two Greek Students Win National Scholarships

Brittani Dipaola and Marco Fanelli were named recipients of the Patrick W. Halloran scholarship provided by the National Order of Omega. Named for the Order of Omega's past executive director, both recipients will each receive $500.

Every Order of Omega chapter across the country is able to nominate up to two students from their chapter for these national scholarships. Both of UCF’s nominees won due to their leadership and service to Order of Omega, Greek System, and campus community.

Dipaola is currently serving as the chapter President of Order of Omega at UCF. She was recently selected as the overall chair for Greek Week, which will entail coordinating involvement of 46 fraternities and sororities. She is a senior and member of Delta Delta Delta. Dipaola has been active in her sorority, serving as philanthropy chair, as well as Knight-Thon captain (the university’s all-night dance marathon), and has served as the marketing director for Uknighted for a Cure (the organization for Relay for Life.) She has also served as the Student Government Association’s Senate Leadership Council.

Fanelli is a senior and member of the Burnett Honor’s College. A proud member of Tau Kappa Epsilon, he has served in leadership roles in his fraternity, including treasurer, Sargeant-at-Arms, and formal chairman. He has attended numerous national and regional fraternity leadership conferences. In addition, Marco has served on Greek Council as GAMMA chair (risk management and alcohol education), and has served as an associate justice for the Student Government Association.

To date, over 500 chapters have been chartered throughout North America, each sharing the common goal of recognizing the many outstanding student leaders at their institution. Order of Omega sponsors a variety of scholarships to undergraduate students. Since 1985, Order of Omega has awarded $785,000 in undergraduate scholarships and $142,750 in graduate fellowships.
Fashions from Around the World Modeled

The International Fashion Show, a traditional UCF campus event, was held on April 11. The event, first organized by the International Student Association in 1997, came back in style and full force after a four-year interruption.

International and domestic students proudly modeled traditional and modern clothing from countries such as Japan, China, Vietnam, Philippines, India, Iran, France, Lebanon, Haiti, Ukraine, Nigeria and Scotland. Performers took the audience into the world of belly dancing, flamenco and Caribbean Islands. Attendees sampled an array of foods from around the world, from empanadas to wheat salad, spinach pie, chicken tikka, crepes, baklava and cheese blintzes, to name a few.

The event was attended by about 350 students along with administrators and staff. The International Fashion Show was a collaborative effort of offices including the International Student Association, International Services, Multicultural Student Center, and the Student Government Association, as well as many other volunteers and contributors.

High Recognition for Pre-Doctoral Training

The UCF Counseling Center’s Pre-doctoral Training Program has been accredited by the American Psychological Association for the first time. The center was evaluated by APA against their highest standards of expectation and training practices at the doctorate level to become accredited. Additionally, the center was accredited for seven years—the highest number of years one can be accredited.

Initiated in 2006, the program is in its sixth year with a total of two doctoral students graduating per year. The center’s training program is under the direction of Associate Director Karen Hofmann. She states, “We are proud to be recognized both regionally and nationally as a competitive pre-doctoral internship site in professional psychology.”

Pre-doctoral interns, Jamie Young and Natalie Arcario, share their comments and experiences at the Counseling Center:

“Earning APA accreditation means that the highest standard is upheld, giving my training a higher level of credibility and making me a more marketable job candidate,” says Young.

Arcario stated, “...my clinical training at UCF has only surpassed my expectations. I have already gained enormous experience both professionally and personally working within a diverse counseling center that truly values training and growth.”

In addition, the program has an interdisciplinary premaster’s internship for students completing their masters in mental health counseling, social work or clinical psychology. The UCF masters internship began in 1998 and has graduated 63 students since then, and is viewed as one of the best master’s internship training sites in Central Florida.

Alternative Spring Break: First-Year Students Give Back

The Department of Housing and Residence Life strives to provide students a safe and secure environment that is conducive to academic success and personal achievement. In the Lake Claire Community first-year students had the opportunity to live in Volunteers uKnighted.

Although the students living there are individually different, together they are one community, working through their diversity and coming together for a common goal of serving the community. Resident Alyssa McCauley commented, “Living in the Volunteers uKnighted community is a great way to get involved on campus as a first-year student. Volunteering is one of the most selfless and rewarding acts that a person can do.”

This year a group of volunteers uKnighted residents spent their Alternative Spring Break in Birmingham, Alabama teaching the Junior Achievement Program to children at Abrahms Elementary School.

Faculty advisor Hannah Hodges shared her experience, “I learned a lot about each member on the trip and enjoyed knowing that we were making an impact. ASB is a fantastic way to get involved, meet new friends, and make a positive difference in the world.”

The Volunteers uKnighted living-learning community was created in fall 2010 by Jeremy Foskitt and 40 residents committed over 1,600 hours of community service this year. The community has several partners on campus and in the Orlando community including Volunteer UCF, Office of Student Involvement, Pet Rescue by Judy, Second Harvest Food Bank, and the UCF Arboretum.

Health Services Brings Free STD Testing to Campus

Health Services teamed up with the Orange County Health Department in April to bring free STD testing to campus in support of STD awareness month. Two events were hosted that resulted in approximately 160 students utilizing the free testing. The screenings included tests for chlamydia, gonorrhea, HIV and syphilis.

“Nearly half of all new STD infections occur in young adults age 13 to 24,” said Dr. Michael Deichen, director of Health Services. “In the U.S., that’s over 10 million new cases each year, so it is crucial that all sexually active young adults be tested.”

While STD testing is available year-round at the Heath Center, there are nominal charges for the tests. By hosting the free event, Health Services hopes to increase the amount of students getting tested.

“We’re working with the Orange County Health Department to add more free screening event dates,” said Megan Pabian, coordinator of Community Relations and Public Affairs for Health Services. “We want to test as many students as possible.”
Student Disability Services
Recognizes Students and Faculty

Student Disability Services hosted a student and faculty recognition event to celebrate the achievements of UCF students with disabilities and faculty who demonstrated excellence in the area of academic accommodations.

At the event, it was noted that 131 students registered with SDS had filed their intent to graduate for spring 2012, which is a record high. Pam Rea, director for SDS, commended faculty members who think globally by designing their courses to be accessible for all students. She also discussed the creation of a faculty and student advisory board at SDS, so the concerns of students and faculty members could be voiced and addressed.

New and exciting technology that is on the horizon for SDS was revealed including Knights Access, a computerized system for making accommodation requests, and DocSoft, which will improve UCF’s system of producing closed captioned videos. SDS continues to make strides toward greater accessibility on campus.

Students who felt stressed during spring final exams had the opportunity to walk with a companion—an affectionate rescue dog. “Pets for Vets,” an outreach event to support veterans, was open to everyone on campus.

Pet Rescue by Judy, a no-kill animal shelter dedicated to the rescuing, rehabilitating, re-socializing and re-homing of adoptable companion animals provided 20 dogs for students to walk, pet and interact with. Studies show that, when interacting with an animal, it lowers one’s blood pressure and helps that person to relax. It can also help increase socialization and provide companionship.

Veteran Chris O’Connor and his dog Lucas are inspiring examples of how “man’s best friend” can provide a sense of purpose, healing, routine, socialization and companionship for a combat veteran adjusting to student life after being in the military. O’Connor’s adjustment to civilian life was challenging due to his PTSD symptoms, shrapnel wounds and traumatic brain injury after being in combat in Iraq. Back in the states, he had no plan. That is when he decided to get a companion, Lucas—an AKC Star Puppy AKC Canine Good Citizen provided by the Patriot Rovers. Around the dog’s neck are the identification tags of a soldier Corporal Kevin “Adam” Lucas who died May 26, 2006 in Iraq. O’Connor says that his dog “changed his life.” He now has a companion that enables him to socialize, go out in public without fear and gives him reason to get up in the morning. He is now successfully finishing his degree in social work and also works as a veteran peer mentor helping other veterans adjust to college life.

Pets for Vets was an event designed to promote the use of animals to de-stress students’ lives, highlight the resources available to them, help veterans adjust to college and civilian life, and promote the adoption of rescued animals from the shelter.

The interactive activity is sponsored by the Veterans Academic Resource Center along with other UCF departments and Central Florida community organizations and businesses.

Survival to Thrival Tour Benefits Pantry

Students, faculty and staff were invited to listen to an aspirational talk by Frank McKinney’s “Survival to Thrival Tour” at the Knights Helping Knights Pantry on February 7. In addition to his talk, for every person that attended the event, a $25 donation from his foundation was made to the pantry.

McKinney, a real estate developer and author, visits homeless shelters, soup kitchens and food pantries around the country. The Survival of Thrival Tour is about awareness of the homeless and hungry but most of all it is about taking action. For more information on the Frank McKinney and his tour, visit: http://frank-mckinney.com/

De-Stress with Man’s Best Friend

Students Tug, Sink and Smash

The RWC’s longest standing team event highlights RWC’s creativity in providing recreational programming for UCF students.

The Recreation and Wellness Center hosted RecFest XXII “Ready, Set, Sink,” event in which 48 three-member co-ed teams competed in field-day related games. The signature event Battleship was held in the RWC lap pool where each team was given a canoe, a bucket, and water guns to splash and sink the other canoes. Other fun games included Melonball, Tug-of-war and Lord of the Rings.

Senior Dana Santoro couldn’t wait for the games to start. “This was my second year participating in RecFest. I think it’s a great opportunity for friendly competition with your peers and the games are always innovative.”

This year’s winning team was comprised of UCF students: John Boyle, Brandon Baroody and Andie Weston.

“RecFest is the RWC’s longest running special event, starting in 1989,” said Gary Cahen, assistant director, intramural sports. “Dubbed ‘UCF’s Greatest Day of Play’ by the staff that created the event, RecFest offers a great mixture of competitive sports events as well as goofy recreational contests and relays. What makes the event great is that teams are paired up with random students throughout the event to ensure plenty of social interaction.”
PRIME STEM Scholars and Peer Mentors Present on Research

Nine PRIME STEM/Student Support Services scholars and three peer mentors recently presented their research at UCF’s Showcase of Undergraduate Research. Students presented research in the areas of biology, biomedical sciences, chemistry, physics, engineering and computer science.

The showcase demonstrates to students, faculty, staff, alumni and the greater Central Florida community that student research builds upon and enriches the UCF undergraduate experience.

Natasha Mitchell, coordinator for Academic Support Services for the PRIME STEM Project, noted that she is pleased to work with such a focused, motivated and amazing group of scholars and peer mentors who are pursuing careers in research in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). “Our PRIME STEM scholars and peer mentors are the leaders, scientists, researchers, and engineers of tomorrow and they are ready to face any challenge that they might face,” said Mitchell.

The UCF PRIME STEM Project/Student Support Services is part of the TRiO program funded by the US Department of Education and is housed in the Division of Student Development and Enrollment Services.

Students Network with Employers

When Andrea Hines was in preschool, a visit from basketball players inspired her to start playing the sport. Now a freshman guard on the UCF women’s basketball team, Hines and her teammates shot hoops with preschoolers from UCF’s Creative School for Children. They encouraged the kids as they took their best shots at a hoop a few feet off the ground.

“When I was younger, this was how I started playing,” Hines said. “Older kids came to my preschool and showed me how to play. It feels good to return the favor today.”

Psychology Majors’ Opportunities

Many psychology students visit the Career Services office asking what they can do with their degree. With psychology being the largest major at UCF, there is a need to showcase the limitless opportunities available to psychology students.

Erin Robinson and Renee Hudson, graduate assistants in the Career Services office, hosted an event entitled, “What ELSE Can I Do With My Psychology degree?” The event had two components: an employer and faculty panel discussion and a networking event.

During both activities, students learned about the array of employment opportunities available to them and why employers recruit them, how to market their degree, and how professionals and employers with psychology backgrounds got into their fields.

One student stated, “What I liked most about this event was to see all of the ‘out of the box’ opportunities with a psychology degree. It really opened my eyes.”

The event was well attended with 70 students present for the panel discussion and 78 attending the networking event.

Student-Athletes Volunteer at Creative School for Children

Several UCF football and women’s soccer players joined the women’s basketball team at the field day program at CSC. The outreach initiative was one of many ways in which UCF’s student-athletes give back to the community. In the past two years, 1,430 student-athletes have spent nearly 170,000 hours volunteering throughout Central Florida.

Khalilah Mitchell, director of program development for the UCF women’s basketball team, said “giving back helps to teach the student-athletes life lessons.”

Flag Football Teams Win Titles

UCF’s Co-Rec Flag Football team won two national titles, while UCF’s Men’s Flag Football teams won their second title in three years.

UCF Men’s and Co-Rec Flag Football teams racked up three championships over the winter break at two prestigious national tournaments: the American Collegiate Intramural Sports Tournament in Pensacola, Florida and the National Campus Championship Series Tournament at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. UCF Men’s, Women’s and Co-Rec Flag football teams have now won 10 national titles since 1979; eight of those titles just in the past four years.

UCF Intramural sports are part of UCF’s Recreation and Wellness center, funded by the Student Government Association. Comprehensive programs like officiating and intramural sports are part of the RWC’s mission to continually enrich campus life through programs that foster healthy lifestyles.
Welcome to SDES

New Employees: 12.23.2011 - 4.27.2012

- Gian-Karlo Alvarez, program assistant, Career Services
- Aileen Baliwag, senior computer repair tech, SDES Information Technology
- Tina Bott, IT business analyst, Registrar's Office
- Darrick Brown, associate director academic support services, Academic Support for Student-Athletes
- Rosemarie Cogswell, coordinator university housing, Housing and Residence Life
- Deanna Feher, specialist social work services, Counseling Center
- Jillian Flowers, financial assistance counselor, Health Services
- Amanda Oggio, coordinator university housing, H&RL
- Megan Giddens, specialist social work services, Wellness and Health Promotion Services
- Rachelle Gross, physician's assistant, HS
- David Santiago Huertas, office manager, CC
- Marina Ishak, fiscal assistant, HS
- Matthew Kastro, senior computer specialist, SDES IT
- Scott Mauro, coordinator information/publication services, Recreation and Wellness Center
- Sarah Oslund, Psychologist, CC
- Jamie Owen, assistant general counsel, Student Legal Services
- Cynthia Perez, program assistant, HS
- Kelli Prebyl, dental hygienist, HS
- David Pierlus, coordinator university housing, H&RL
- Angel Ramos, maintenance supervisor, Student Union
- Lisa Schert, advanced registered nurse practitioner, HS
- Nahayl Schmitz, dental assistant, HS
- Alice Smith, certified medical assistant, HS
- Valerie Smith, coordinator human services, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Taylor Stokes, coordinator university housing, H&RL
- Cassandra Turk, program assistant, TRIO Programs
- Nathan Vink, coordinator student affairs, RWC

SDES Presentations

- SASI (Support All Staff Involvement) hosted two events: February 3: “Reflect, Refresh, Refine,” a professional development workshop facilitated by Dee Byrnes from the Byrnes Group; March 23: “SDES USPS Mini Wellness Expo” at the Recreation and Wellness Center. The expo was composed of six sessions featuring different ways to begin or continue healthy lifestyles.
- Jeremy Foskitt, Housing and Residence Life, presented “The Yearly Checkout: Assessing Residential Learning Communities” at the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators annual conference. Foskitt discussed the implementation strategies, strengths and prospects of effectively assessing the state of living-learning communities.

SDES Awards & Recognition

- The Recreation and Wellness Center staff members were recognized with a plaque by the UCF Police Department for their ongoing efforts to make the RWC a safe environment for students. Police Chief Richard Beary praised the RWC efforts in four key areas: Police accessibility to facility security cameras; locker management and proximity to security cameras; marketing campaigns on theft risk; and front desk renovations, including state-of-the-art vein reading technology that allows students the option to enter the facility by placing their finger on a touch pad.
- Mary Schmidt-Owens, Health Services, was presented the “Public Health HERO” award from Orange County during its celebration of National Public Health Week. Advocating for a healthy campus community, Owens, co-chair of the UCF Smoke-Free Steering Committee, was honored for her commitment in transforming UCF into a smoke-free campus. The smoke-free policy will is scheduled to go into effect fall 2012.
- Stacey Pearson-Wharton, Counseling Center, was recognized as an American College Personnel Association Diamond Honoree. ACPA's Diamond Honoree Program is both a recognition program and a fund raising activity. Those nominated are honored for their outstanding and sustained contributions to higher education and to student affairs. This is a “Pay It Forward” program that looks to the future.

SDES Changes

- Dispute Resolution Services name changed to the Office of Integrity and Ethical Development. Their focus is directed in the areas of integrity, ethics and professionalism as it relates to educating students on civility, decision making and strengthening conflict resolution skills both inside and outside the classroom. They are committed to supporting UCF faculty and staff in providing outreach programs that are geared towards upholding the values associated with the UCF Creed.

UCF Stands For Opportunity

Josefina Aleman Named USPS Employee of the Month

UCF honored Josefina Aleman, senior custodian RWC, as the USPS Employee of the Month for February 2012.

Josefina Aleman gave of herself during this very emotional time for RWC staff member. Sarah Hunt, associate director RWC, says: “Ms. Aleman gave of herself during this very tough time... She has extended herself to help other coworkers in ways I can only describe as extremely special.”

Aleman's peers also praised her work ethic during the RWC's expansion in 2011; she was a true leader assisting the second shift with cleaning duties in the extra work space.

SDES Publications & Articles

- Dennis Congos, First Year Advising and Exploration, published a study skills book, Starting Out! in Community College. The book contains 90 articles on learning and life management skills; education and training; employment and careers; banking and credit; and practical topics for students entering college.
- Jenna Nobili, First Year Advising and Exploration, and Emily Jensen, First Year Experience, recently had an article, “Supporting an Out-Of-State Student Population through Living-Learning Communities,” published in the National Academic Advising Association's Academic Advising Today journal.

SDES Staff Steps into Healthy Mode

Some SDES faculty and staff volunteered to take part in the SDES Healthy Knights Challenge. The six-week program provided the tools and support necessary to begin making a conscious and deliberate choice to be active and aware of personal wellness daily.

Individuals earned points for completing health assessments, keeping food and physical activity journals, attending workshops, and participating in group exercise activities such as walking together. The goal was to not only get SDES employees in a healthy mindset but to also foster community.

Program participation includes 251 faculty and staff members involving 21 SDES departments, 17 SDES teams and two UCF teams. The SDES Healthy Knights program ended on April 11 with the Office of Student Leadership Development winning 1st place with the most points.