UCF Living Learning Communities

Academic and Social Opportunities

Students enjoy all the usual advantages of living on campus in residence halls with added benefits of living among a group that shares academic goals and interests.

The Department of Housing and Residence Life oversees a total of 15 Living Learning Communities that provide opportunities where students learn to bridge their academic, social and institutional experiences in residence halls.

LLCs have become a priority among several universities and have been designed to create intentional learning experiences that lead to increased student retention, satisfaction, and overall academic success. To further develop UCF’s LLCs, Housing and Residence Life has implemented various initiatives to enhance learning. Faculty involvement in LLCs has been a priority this year as research has proven that it: supports and challenges students’ learning, creates a supportive and cohesive environment, and provides diverse experiences and innovative teaching methods.

Exposure to learning, different perspectives, and adding fun encourages students to expand their comfort of building relationships with others and helps to reinforce their academic goals.

Gabby Wolk, Business Knights LLC resident said, “I came to this community not knowing what to expect, but this year has been wonderful and I have enjoyed growing as a student and meeting new people in my LLC who share the same goals.”

UCF students who participate in LLCs have a 6.2 percent higher retention rate compared to non-LLC students. Students who participate in a LLC excel academically and tend to be more connected to the university and hold leadership positions in student organizations. “It was a great experience to be surrounded by like-minded people who shared your interests. That definitely helped with the transition to college,” said Todd Currie, former LEAD Scholar who lived in the LEAD Scholars LLC residence his first year at UCF.

Dedicated to UCF’s brand, “UCF Stands for Opportunity,” Living Learning Communities have greatly impacted the departments within and outside of the Division of Student Development and Enrollment Services. A variety of opportunities are extended to students, faculty and staff that promote a successful student and a more engaged community. As Housing and Residence Life progress in the strengthening of partnerships, LLCs will continue to support the SDES Strategic Initiatives as well as maintain a vision that aligns with the UCF Creed.

Some examples of LLCs are:

• The Honors @ Tower III is a residential experience for students who are members of The Burnett Honors College that strive to create an atmosphere dedicated to academics, developing leadership and interpersonal skills.
• Healthy Lifestyles @ Lake Claire provides students with a choice to live in an environment free of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs and not currently prescribed prescription drugs. The Healthy Knights in the Body residents are encouraged to attend health and wellness programs within their community and on campus.
• L.E.A.R.N. LLC @ Nike is for students interested in the science, math and engineering field. Participants will “Learn” from faculty and peers as part of a residential experience, be in an “Environment” that supports their “Academic” success in science and engineering, gain experience in “Research” with faculty, receive a $500 scholarship and gain a “Network” of friends.

For a list of more LLCs, visit: www.housing.ucf.edu/choices.

Experience a Living Learning Community

LLC opportunities allow students to:

• Develop supportive peer relationships who have similar academic goals
• Increase contact with faculty and staff outside of the classroom
• Expand knowledge and professional skills within their degree program
• Foster the joining of the academic and social aspects of student life
• Enhance in-class learning by participating in academic events facilitated by Resident Assistants and peer mentors.

Residents of the Honors LLC in Tower III engage with The Burnett Honors College Associate Dean Martin Dupuis who shared information on opportunities with the college at the Distinguished Speaker Series event.
**UCF Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month**

Hispanic Heritage Month was held September 15 through October 15 when the histories, cultures and contributions of Hispanic people were celebrated in America.

September 15 is the anniversary of independence for many Latin American countries including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Many other Latin American countries’ independence days fall within that 30-day period.

The UCF Hispanic American Student Association, Colombian Student Association and other student organizations, Multicultural Student Center, and The Libre Initiative and other representatives from the Central Florida community teamed up to observe the impact Hispanics have made at UCF and in the community. Nearly 20 percent of UCF students are Hispanic. The month consisted of Hispanic dancing, enjoying food and sharing cultures.

Alex Ferrer, a former police officer, attorney, Florida Circuit Court judge and current host of the TV show “Judge Alex,” presented the origins of Hispanic Heritage Month and importance of the Hispanic community.

“Ms. Libre” included a panel of prominent Hispanic women such as the former first lady of Puerto Rico, Lucé Vela Gutiérrez, who encouraged the success and power of Hispanic women.

**UCF Volunteers Impact Communities**

On October 19, students, alumni, faculty and staff came together to volunteer a day of service for UCF’s Knights Give Back.

The Chicago and Tampa trips were the first two alumni chapters to take KGB outside of the Orlando area – the volunteers at these sites were UCF Alumni from those areas. Twenty volunteers restored a playground at the Chicago Parks District, which involved mulching and landscaping. In Tampa, UCF alumni volunteered to help provide meals for the homeless at the Metropolitan Ministries.

In the Orlando area, alumni volunteered with 50 students at Greenwood Cemetery, cleaning tombstones in the city’s oldest cemetery. At Quest’s Camp Thunderbird in Apopka, volunteers cleaned up the cabins at the campsite, bagged pine needles, and learned about the organization’s initiative to provide a camping environment for people with special abilities. Other locations volunteers serviced included: Give Kids the World, The Mustard Seed of Central Florida, Avian Reconditioning Center, Bill Frederick Park and City Year Orlando.

“The impact on the community from Knights Give Back is monumental. This year Knights Give Back helped save Orlando, Tampa, and Chicago communities a total of $72,000 for the day [$15 on an average saved]. The team at Project Bithlo, comprised of representatives from both College Democrats and College Republicans, donated 100 plants to the butterfly garden project – an effort showing that community service expands beyond political boundaries. Knights Give Back means more than just a monetary impact. We’re engaging our community. We are showing them what it means to be a Knight and they remember UCF for it. Our community knows that we are proud to be part of this now 50-year-young university and the surrounding area we’ve all come to call our home, even if that home is temporary.”

**UCF Fraternity Honored for National Excellence**

UCF’s chapter of Zeta Beta Tau was recently awarded the national fraternity’s highest honor, the Brummer Cup.

With more than 90 chapters across the United States, the Zeta Beta Tau national organization each year selects one chapter as its most outstanding for best representing the tenets of intellectual awareness, social responsibility, integrity and brotherly love.

UCF’s Delta Iota chapter, founded in 2005, has more than 90 members and has made an impact in Orlando through community service. The chapter raised $11,500 for the Children’s Miracle Network through philanthropic work during the past year.

“The Delta Iota chapter takes community service very seriously, which is why we take hospital tours of the Arnold and Winnie Palmer children hospitals in Downtown Orlando various times each semester and really try to work with the children benefited by the Children’s Miracle Network,” said Daniel Balva, the chapter’s president.

Some other fund-raisers included $3,000 to support Misioneros Del Camino, an orphanage in the poverty-stricken city of Sumpango and $1,000 during Relay for Life to benefit the American Cancer Society.

**Fall Commencement**

Over 2,903 students graduated at the December 13-14 fall Commencement. Congratulations, graduates!
**Fair Fosters Academic Success**

First-year students were the focus of the Student Academic Resource Center’s 10th annual fall Learning Fair 2013. The event aimed to foster academic success and retention through student development of relevant personal and academic skills, and increased awareness and use of learning support services on campus. This fair differs from typical campus outreach initiatives in that the more intimate scale encourages departments and organization to engage students in academic dialog.

The event’s theme, “Black and White and Gold, Celebrating 50 Years of Growing Together,” supported UCF’s 50th anniversary celebration. Archival photos of UCF’s younger years were displayed throughout the room. There were 21 university departments, services and academic organizations that offered students information to help make them successful at UCF.

The SARC Learning Fair 2013 was a great success with a total of 428 student attendees with approximately 52 percent freshmen. Based on results of a written evaluation, 100 percent of participants felt that the Learning Fair was well organized and 97 percent felt more aware of UCF campus resources after attending the Learning Fair.

**Read for the Record**

Preschoolers from UCF Creative School for Children joined with more than two million children across the country to help set a world record. Read for the Record, sponsored by Jumpstart and the Pearson Foundation, is an annual national reading event that stresses the importance of high-quality early education in America. More than 2.3 million people participated in last year’s event.

With the help of students from the College of Education and Human Performance, the little Knights read Otis, the story of an old tractor and his farmyard friends by Loren Long.
SDES Connects Students

Pegasus Palooza Welcomes Students to UCF

Pegasus Palooza, the UCF official welcome week, was full of social and academic activities for students to get acquainted with the UCF campus, meet people, and simply to have fun. SDES facilitated many events during the first week of the fall semester, August 19-24.

Highlights of the week included entertainment from the Campus Activities Board, an agency of the Office of Student Involvement. “Capital Cities” concert was held at the CFE Arena. Students danced in front of the stage and the band interacted with the crowd, teaching them some of their own “iconic” moves. While performing a remix to their hit song “Safe and Sound,” the lights were explosive, balloons dropped and confetti was fired, which added to the entire dance party experience. “My friends and I had the best time at the Capital Cities concert,” stated Laura Plata, a junior. “The energy in the room was contagious, that you couldn’t help but dance.”

It was time to “LOL” with the comedy show performed by Kenan Thompson. Speaking in front of a crowd of approximately 6,000 students, he discussed his life in show business along with some of his experiences with his most memorable roles. “He was extremely funny,” exclaimed Jessica Fink, student. “I loved his stand up portion and how he was quick on his feet with responding to questions from the audience.”

Some other activities included:

- Welcome Expo was a one-stop event for students to learn about a variety of important on-campus resources. This year’s attendance and participation marked one of the highest years yet with 4,585 individuals and the contribution of 33 academic departments; 101 student organizations and clubs; and 26 vendors that surround the UCF community.

- Transfer and Transition Services welcomed students with bagels and was on-hand to assist transfer students with their services.

- The Multicultural Academic and Support Services workshop offered insight to their programs and how students may qualify for a scholarship through the First Generation or Brother to Brother programs.

- Career Services’ “Field Day Splash” provided music games and prizes. Students enjoyed taking a swing at the dunk tank, cooling off on the water slide and chilling with a snow cone.

- Pegasus Palooza went lakeside at the UCF Recreation and Wellness Center Lake Claire recreation area where students played games such as tug-o-war, ladder ball and volleyball. Students had fun on the water with paddle boards, kayaks and canoes.

- UCF Homecoming 2013 theme was revealed: “The Golden Homecoming.” Pegasus Palooza was an opportunity for students to connect with the UCF community as well as other students.

Multicultural Transfer Student Reception

On August 26, the Office of Multicultural Academic and Support Services hosted its 2nd annual Multicultural Transfer Student Reception. Over 100 multicultural transfer students attended the networking event, meeting representatives from various offices on campus, including the Office of Pre-Professional Advising, Office of Student Involvement and Career Services. Several members of the SDES Leadership Team were in attendance with Assistant Vice President Belinda Boston who provided welcoming remarks for the transfer students. Boston encouraged students to be proactive and take advantage of the many resources UCF has to offer.

The MASS office announced its new monthly “Transfer Talk Tuesdays,” which provides multicultural transfer students with a space to voice their questions and concerns during their transition. The talks will be co-facilitated along with the Office of Transfer and Transition Services.

Employers Help Polish Students’ Interviewing Skills

On September 12, a total of 165 students attended the fall 2013 Employment Prep Conference so they could get prepared to meet employers at the upcoming Career Services Expo. The event opened with an employer panel which answered questions about the job search process, and ways that students could market themselves effectively to companies. Panelists included employers from Lockheed Martin, Total Quality Logistics, City Year and the CIA. Employers also provided both resume critiques and practice interviews. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and learn about how they could personally enhance their own employability.

One-Stop-Housing Information for Students

The fall 2013 Off-Campus Housing Fair was held at the UCF Memory Mall on November 20. Since spring 2008, the fair has been organized by the Central Florida Future but this year it was coordinated by Florida Today. The event was an opportunity for students to get housing information in one central location. The UCF Off-Campus Student Services and Student Neighborhood Relations office, now named Student Neighborhood Relations, has provided assistance and support to the fair over the years.

SNR has worked to include Housing and Residence Life and off-campus apartment managers (both the student residential and conventional communities) to participate in the Housing Fair. There were 32 vendors which included 16 off-campus student residential apartment communities. Among the off-campus apartment communities located within two miles from UCF, there were some new vendors such as the Plaza at the University and the Retreat, Lake Amber. Each vendor offered free food, drinks and games, and prizes were awarded. A DJ provided entertainment and assisted vendors in promoting their apartment special deals.

This semester, SNR opted to focus upon on-campus housing as the center of the Housing Fair. The booths were in the center of the event with free food, music, and promotional items, directing students to on-campus housing. According to staff, the event was a successful promotion especially for on-campus housing. The housing fair was well attended by more than several hundred students, faculty and staff members.
First Knights Initiated to Assist First-Generation Students

First Knights, a newly Registered Student Organization, gives first-generation students the opportunity to socialize with other students alike and become acclimated with the UCF campus. The organization holds events to bring together as many students as possible giving these students an opportunity to ask questions they may not be comfortable asking in other situations.

David Oglethorpe, coordinator for First Year Advising and Exploration, initiated the concept of the First Knights organization in an effort to help first-generation students. Oglethorpe along with FYAE coordinators Dillon Burleson and graduate assistant Becky Easter serve as advisors to First Knights.

“The biggest challenge for the first-generation students lie within not knowing what to expect or what to ask,” stated Oglethorpe. “Students who have parents who have completed college degrees are able to rely on them to guide them through the expectations of college, but first-generation students have to go elsewhere to find this information. It can be very difficult to let someone know that you don’t understand something that is perceived by many to be general knowledge.”

Students interested in learning more about the First Knights organization can email: LaShaunda Hayes, president of the organization, at: 2010L.Hayes@knights.ucf.edu.

Pre-Tailgate Rally

Sophomore and Second Year Center, The Burnett Honors College, and Housing and Residence Life held its 6th annual welcome back “Pre-Tailgate Rally” on August 28 at Tower III residence hall. The outreach program served as a welcome to the start of the fall semester and a Pre-Tailgate Rally to get ready for the football game against Akron. The event focused on the Tower’s residents, with specific promotion to the honor’s and student-athlete residents. The event provided a fun setting for students to interact with support offices, and offered an opportunity to discuss programs and services with campus representatives.

Three New Buildings in Greek Park

On September 28, LEAD Scholars hosted a Family Weekend breakfast for current scholars and their families in the Student Union.

Throughout the event, participants were able to choose from a wide-variety of breakfast foods on the continental-style buffet line. While enjoying their breakfast and visiting with other families and the LEAD Scholars staff, attendees were encouraged to watch a slideshow with photos from all the events LEAD Scholars had hosted.

The LEAD Scholars staff also introduced some UCF Football traditions to students and families. On this same day, LEAD Scholars hosted its first televised football game of the season with approximately 100 students and their families. The UCF vs. South Carolina was the first sold out game since the first game in UCF history in 1979.

Benjamin Lehrer, a first-year LEAD Scholar, stated, “My parents really enjoyed the LEAD staff coming around to the table and mingling with them.”

Three New Buildings in Greek Park

On November 7, the Fraternity and Sorority Life staff as well as the members of Chi Omega and Kappa Kappa Gamma welcomed over 100 attendees to an open house.

The open house, in conjunction with the UCF 50th Anniversary celebration, marked a milestone for the fraternity and sorority community with the opening of the two sorority houses and the F&SL administration building. “We are one of the few institutions in the country that has an actual Fraternity and Sorority Life building,” states Greg Mason, director for Fraternity and Sorority Housing and Development. Alumni, students and administrators were provided tours of the three buildings.

Each sorority house is over 12,000 square feet and provides 39 bed spaces, plus a graduate assistant house director apartment. The F&SL building provides office spaces for SDES professionals working directly with the chapters, work space for students, as well as a multipurpose room for meetings, programs and workshops.

UCF has 46 fraternities and sororities with nearly 3,500 student members involved. There are now 13 houses in Greek Park, nine that are privately owned by House Corporations (alumni) and four that are owned by UCF. This increased the total number of bed spaces in Greek Park to 464.

Career Services’ New Initiative: The Ready Room

On October 3, approximately 1,700 students had the opportunity to talk to over 200 employers at the Career Expo. Prior to the event, Career Services prepares students with programs and services. This year, they implemented a new initiative at the expo by hosting a “Ready Room.” It provided students an opportunity to get immediate feedback and coaching prior to meeting with employers.

The Ready Room consisted of four stations:

1. How Do I Look? – Students stood in front of a mirror and were able to get their business suits critiqued. Scissors, safety pins and bobby pins were all on hand for last minute fixes.

2. Picture Perfect – Students were dressed and looking sharp for their LinkedIn profile photograph. They were very excited to be able to replace their casual photo for a professional one. It was also a great opportunity to educate students on “LinkedIn” as a powerful networking tool.

3. Google Employers – Students were offered a work station with laptops and practical guidance on how to research employers. Having knowledge of the companies they were interested in meeting was valued by both students and employers.

4. Practice Run – This station was definitely a hit. Students were able to practice maintaining eye contact, a firm handshake, a smile and a strong introduction. Students had the chance to work one-on-one with a career professional to try out their pitch.

The office staff was excited about this new initiative; the turnout exceeded their expectations. They had almost 500 students come through the Ready Room and the student feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

One student commented, “I’m so glad this was available. It is such a valuable resource and made me feel more confident in myself and ready for the career fair.” Another said, “This was a great addition to the job fair. It allowed students to not only prep, but release nervous energy before meeting with employers. Very satisfying.”

Students signed up for the Picture Perfect station.
SDES Promotes Healthy Knights

Healthy Knights Expo is about Staying Healthy

The 7th annual Healthy Knights Expo was held on October 2 inside the Student Union Pegasus Ballroom offering various health and wellness information stations as well as providing space for free flu shots to students, courtesy of the Health Center. While waiting in line for the flu shot, students enjoyed free fresh fruit and smoothies from Smoothie King.

CAPS offered opportunities for the students to learn about mental health issues as well as increasing awareness around diversity and body image issues. Students were able to talk with clinicians about services and programs offered through the center. Bodhi, CAPS animal assisted therapy dog (in training), was also present to meet with students.

Smoke-Free UCF educated students about the smoke-free campus and resources available for those ready to quit. WHPS was on-hand to pass out information about HIV testing and sexual health related resources.

The Recreation and Wellness Center conducted demonstrations of some of its fitness classes. Ping-pong and other games were available for students to play. Knightro had a great time posing for photos with students and working out with RWC instructors at cardio-kick boxing.

The event was in collaboration with the Student Development and Enrollment Services departments and community partners including the National Association of Mental Illness of Greater Orlando and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Overall, the Healthy Knight Expo was a success and impacting more than 1,200 students. This collaboration between SDES departments was a way to share all the resources available to students to help them be happy, healthy and successful. To view the Healthy Knights video, visit: animoto.com/play/r2WP0kvS9KrV6OUSJ3y8sA.

Hazing—It’s Everyone’s Problem

The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life sponsored several events during the National Hazing Prevention Week, September 23-28. Students signed their names to the “No-Hazing Pledge” banner and held it proudly in support of hundreds of students, faculty and staff walked in the “Silent March” from the Student Union to the CFE Arena. Other activities included a panel discussion with Victim Services and a presentation by Michael Ayalon, Sigma Pi executive director.

Michelle Quinones, coordinator for the Office of Student Conduct, stated in an article, “Hazing – It’s Everyone’s Problem,” in the UCF Faculty Focus Vol. 12, No. 2 2013 edition: UCF does not condone hazing in any form and outlines specific behaviors that fall within the scope of the hazing definition. Behaviors can range from the subtle to the most severe. Any activity which could subject the individual to mental or physical stress, or adversely affect the mental or physical health or dignity of the individual can be considered hazing. Hazing can be a direct or indirect condition of admission into or association with a student organization. An activity may be presumed to be a “forced” activity, regardless of whether the individual willingly chose to participate.

For complete article, visit: www.fctl.ucf.edu/Publications/FacultyFocus/content/2013_2013_august.pdf.

UCF Success with Biofeedback

The title of this year’s NASPA Annual Conference was “Lead–Innovate–Transform” and that is exactly what the coordinator of UCF’s Biofeedback Assisted Relaxation Training program, Pam Mills, is doing," says Peter Mastroianni, assistant director for Wellness and Health Promotion Services. Mills reported the benefits and success of the program.

For the past five years, Mills has been helping UCF students identify their body’s response to stress, learn the close connection between mind and body, and develop relaxation skills to control the fight or flight response.

In the 2012, National College Health Assessment, 19.3% of students nationally (20.3% at UCF) reported that anxiety negatively affected their academic performance and 28.4% (29.5% at UCF) reported that stress had done the same.

Over the past five years, 85-90% of students completing UCF’s biofeedback program have reported a decrease in stress symptoms, perceived stress levels and the ability to utilize the newly learned skills at times of need.

Recently, Mills presented on the “Use of Biofeedback Assisted Relaxation Training as an Aid to Veteran Student Success” at the annual VARC Conference on October 4.

Students can make appointments by calling 407.823.2924.

LEAD Scholars Peer Mentors Awarded Care Advocates

UCF Cares, an initiative of SDES, is an umbrella of care-related programs and resources dedicated to fostering a caring community of Knights. Each month UCF Cares awards students with the Care Advocate award to any student who has demonstrated caring towards a fellow Knight or anyone part of the UCF community (or beyond). Congratulations to the Lead Scholars Peer Mentors who are the first to receive the Care Advocate award.

LEAD Scholars Peer Mentors is a group of students who were selected at the end of their first year to serve as mentors to first-year LEAD Scholars. These 22 students work in and out of the classroom with a group of 15-25 students helping them to get adjusted to UCF. The mentors plan social, tag-along and service events with the freshmen students outside of their classroom requirements.

Germayne Graham, associate director of Leadership Studies, said, “For the past two weeks, the peer mentors have set aside time in their busy schedule to meet one on one with each first year student for at least an hour. The mentors are true advocates for their fellow Knights.”

To learn more about UCF Cares, visit: cares.sdes.ucf.edu.

Submit your SDES articles to Judy Pardo at: judy.pardo@ucf.edu.
The Inclusive Disability Awareness Program (iDAP), held during the month of October-National Disability Awareness Month, was designed to bring awareness and dispel myths about people with disabilities, particularly those who are active members of the UCF community.

The Office of Student Disability Services partnered with UCF students, faculty, staff and local agencies to deliver a series of programs and events that promoted and fostered an inclusive environment for people with disabilities on the UCF campus.

Sessions were made available to faculty, staff and students. The programs included topics such as awareness of the diversity of disabilities through a student panel facilitated by Pride Coalition; employment for students with disabilities presented in partnership with Career Services and the Center for Independent Living; Asperger’s and Autism led by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities; post-traumatic stress syndrome presented by representatives from Veterans Academic Resource Center and the Anxiety Clinic; and online accessibility training for faculty facilitated by the Center for Distributed Learning.

The keynote presenter Marcus Engel, a motivational speaker, discussed his experience of being blinded and severely injured by a drunk driver during his freshman year of college. Since then he has traveled the country to raise disability awareness. Engel’s story impacted over 120 students during an evening session, as he encouraged them to maximize their potential and achieve their dreams.

“Marcus Engel’s positive outlook during his difficult times and the progress he has made since the incident was very inspirational to me,” said Daniel Gonzalez, sophomore, mechanical engineering major.

UCF Student Helps Feed Homeless

Todd Currie, former LEAD Scholar and a member of Volunteer UCF, and a friend co-founded Food Share in November 2012 after meeting a group of homeless people.

The first meals they put together were peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Now, working in partnership with Straight Street Orlando, no one leaves hungry.

At the Downtown Orlando St. George Orthodox Church, the UCF team feeds 100 to 150 people and spends a good deal of time during the week working with faith partners and donors to find enough food for the meals.

“Something we struggle with is that there is just so much need and whether we provide somebody with a plate of food, they might also need a blanket and we don’t always have something like that,” said Currie.

For donations contact Nicole Malone, nicolemalone@knights.ucf.edu or call 209.626.7449. (Photo by Straight Street Orlando)

Class and Hunger Issues Experienced

The 20th Annual Hunger Banquet focuses on bringing poverty, homelessness, and hunger issues to the front of the minds of the UCF community. This year, over 230 students and special guests experienced domestic class and hunger issues first-hand as the interactive experience dividing participants into three different social classes–upper, middle and lower.

Each class was served “food entrées” based on their randomly assigned class rolls. As participants ate their rice, sandwiches, or pecan-crusted chicken dinners, four speakers spoke about the issues of hunger and homelessness in the Orlando area.

The impact was immediately apparent as guests broke their class lines, sharing food with those who happened to draw a less fortunate class role.

Perhaps the most exciting thing for me about the Hunger Banquet is seeing so many students—the Next Generation, so to speak—who care enough to be involved in ending hunger in our community and the world,” said Ted Greenberg, Office of Student Involvement, who participated in the event.

UCF Observes National Disability Awareness Month

The iDAP program keynote speaker was Marcus Engel. Living; Asperger’s and Autism engaged by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities; Experience with disabilities presented in partnership with Career Coalition; employment for students with disabilities presented in partnership with Career Services and the Center for Independent Living; Asperger’s and Autism led by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities; post-traumatic stress syndrome presented by representatives from Veterans Academic Resource Center and the Anxiety Clinic; and online accessibility training for faculty facilitated by the Center for Distributed Learning.

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“Marcus Engel’s positive outlook during his difficult times and the progress he has made since the incident was very inspirational to me,” said Daniel Gonzalez, sophomore, mechanical engineering major.

Lights, Camera, Action

The famous call of every movie director echoed through the halls of the Pegasus Ballroom as Late Knights hosted “Premiere.” The three-hour event screened the exciting new movie Now You See Me for over 800 students. Students were put into the shoes of a movie star as they entered the event via the red carpet, enjoyed classic movie-goer refreshments and had the chance to get a limited edition Late Knights tuxedo shirt. One student remarked over social media, “Late Knights is cool and make Knights always ready for fun and food with new surprises.”

Creativity with Pumpkins

A total of 30 teams (136 students) competed in the Pumpkin Palooza event. Pumpkins and basic supplies were provided but teams were also allowed to bring additional supplies. Teams had the opportunity to use their creativity to cut, paint and decorate their pumpkins. The winners were: 1st Place: 504 Foxes (a team of friends, honors students) won $60 to Tijuana Flats; 2nd Place: Alpha Delta Pi won $30 to Wackadoo; and 3rd Place: Attack O’Lantern (team of friends, roommates) won meal coupons for lunch the Student Union.

LEAD Scholar Tailgate

On August 29, the LEAD Scholars recorded the largest attendance ever at their tailgate with over 100 LEAD Scholars students gathering for food, fun and friendship. Activities held during the tailgate included an impromptu volleyball game, spirit contest and free salsa lessons. Athletic Director Austin Teahan and his assistant Jammal Cooks grilled hamburgers and hotdogs for students to enjoy at the tailgate.

Joe Wolf, director for the LEAD Scholars Association, commented, “This LEAD Scholars tailgate is proof in my eyes that tailgating is more than just drinking. It’s about friendship, school spirit and unity.”
Welcome to SDES

New employees or employees who changed positions within SDES: August–December 2013

- Justin Andrade, coordinator, Fraternity and Sorority Life
- Julie Bhumbhikar, licensed practical nurse, Health Services
- Anthony Blanchard, maintenance specialist, Recreation and Wellness Center
- Brian Blum, sr. computer repair technician, SDES Information Technology
- D’Mya Clay, coordinator, Academic Services for Student-Athletes
- Jay Cortes, office assistant, HS
- Pamela Dow, office manager, SDES IT
- Antoinette Durden, executive administrative assistant, SDES-AVP
- Jerry Emerick, administrative assistant, First Year Experience
- Jillian Griffin, accountant, Health Services
- Debra Ann Reinsmith Hargrove, advanced registered nurse practitioner, HS
- Shanele Harris, senior secretary, Housing and Residence Life
- Robert Haas, sr. systems administrator, SDES IT
- Amy Hesse, director, Creative School for Children
- Jacquelyn Hop, sr. registered nurse specialist, HS
- Herbert Hopkinson, associate director, ASSA
- Kristen Horton, coordinator, Student Academic Resource Center
- Barbara Hunt, custodial worker, RWC
- Jose Iriarte, office assistant, Career Services
- Alberto Justiniano, senior custodial worker, Student Union
- Hilary Kasper, physician assistant, HS
- Jeannie Kirivas, associate director, Student Union
- Michelle Kominarek, program assistant, Registrar’s Office
- Elizabeth Livingston, office assistant, H&R&L
- Cristina Luna, assistant director, F&SL
- Lisa Mann, facilities scheduler, RWC
- Misty Martin, office manager, RO
- Lillian McMahon, office manager, Wellness and Health Promotion Services
- Daniel Meuninck, associate director, FYE
- Lauren Morin, senior registered nurse, HS
- Aracelis Nieves, office assistant, Office of the Vice President
- Angela Newland, coordinator, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Abby Nobili, coordinator, FYE
- Joseph Persaud, pharmacy technician, HS
- Donna Queen, licensed practical nurse, HS
- Macrina Raghunanan, office assistant, Budget and Personnel Support
- Kimberly Rios, assistant director, CS
- Lauren Saliba, web designer, SDES IT
- Hema Samuel, licensed practical nurse, HS
- Mary Scruggs, pharmacist, HS
- Kensington Shields-Dutton, coordinator, Office of Student Involvement
- Shela Siegrest, office manager, Multicultural Academic and Support Services
- Dominique Speight, custodial worker, RWC
- Michelle Tenn, coordinator, Activity & Service Fee Business Office
- Igor Volkov, assistant director, CS
- Donovan Williams, medical records specialist, HS

SDES Welcomes Three New Units

by Maribeth Ehasz
Vice President SDES

Please join me in welcoming our colleagues from Undergraduate Admissions, Student Financial Assistance and Student Outreach Services back to the SDES family. There was a period of time in the past that we were part of the same division and it is good to be together once again. The addition of these units will strengthen our ability to make a difference in student success at UCF.

Undergraduate Admissions is responsible for identifying prospective UCF undergraduate students, efficiently facilitating their application process, and providing advice to family members and counselors about the distinctive characteristics and competitive advantages of choosing to become a part of the UCF experience.

Student Financial Assistance supports the success of UCF students by providing an effective and efficient delivery of student aid that supports their goal of obtaining a UCF degree.

Student Outreach Services is responsible for providing opportunities for success for underrepresented students enrolled in grades 6-12 within the Central Florida community.

SDES Changes

- Amy Hesse, is now the director for Creative School for Children.

Recognition and Presentations

- Richard Berwanger, senior maintenance superintendent for Housing and Residence Life, was named USPS 2013 Employee of the Year.
- Bob Snow, Sophomore and Second Year Center, teamed up with Troy Hahr, academic advisor-College of Business Administration, to co-present at the October 18 NASPA [National Association of Student Personnel Administrators] Florida Drive in Conference.
- Kristina Grabnickas, Health Services, volunteered to be a judge for selecting the 2013 Homecoming king and queen.
- SDES Heart ‘n Soles, UCF’s largest team in the Heart Walk, raised $3,359.95 to benefit the American Heart Association.

Healthy Knights SDES Staff Wellness Challenge 2014

by this year’s coordinator:
Peter.Mastroianni@ucf.edu

A healthy workplace promotes success and increased job satisfaction. We are challenging you and your colleagues to take positive steps for your own health and wellbeing now and for the future. We would also like to see which departments of SDES most embrace and promote wellness.

- Registration began on January 7. On January 15 at noon was the official kick-off Wellness-Walk starting at the Reflecting Pond.
- The goals will once again focus on increasing physical activity levels, increasing consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables and daily intake of water.
- Workshops and group exercise opportunities
- ENERGI Station Group Activity as well as the Exercise at Your Desk program
- NEW: Stress Management series aimed at building relaxation skills.
- NEW: Teams will compete in three different size categories and it will be easier to score team points. Awards will be presented for teams with 1-6 members, 7-15 members, and 16 and above.
- NEW: All wellness efforts will count towards individual and group points regardless of time of day.

All materials will be available at: Bewellucf.com under “Staff Challenge.”

SASI Presentation, Perfect Timing

SASI [Support All Staff Involvement] in conjunction with Human Resources hosted a Goal Setting workshop on December 10. It was perfect timing as SDES employees begin to prepare their Performance Appraisals. This was an opportunity for USPS staff members to think about creating their short and long term goals, and what they need for their growth and development as professionals. The workshop, presented by Patty Farris, was interactive and allowed enough time to work on participants’ goals and share information with other USPS staff members. “Our challenge from Patty is to find a ‘goal buddy’ and to be ‘SMART’ about our goals,” said Carolyn Standner, leader for SASI. Over 40 SDES USPS employees attended the workshop.

Holiday Celebration Winners

- Holiday Decorating Competition: 1st-First Year Experience; 2nd-SDES Information Technology; and 3rd-Community Support
- Gingerbread House Competition: SDES IT
- Human Tree: SDES Leadership Team

Congratulations!