A Message from our Director

Hello!

October is a very interesting time of year. Fall is here!

This month is breast cancer awareness month. Thank you to those of you who participated in the Breast Cancer Awareness Kickoff! If you know survivors, recognize them in some special way. It can be a hug, a warm smile while asking about their overall health and well-being or simply taking a moment to reflect on the life of someone that you remember who has lost their life due to breast cancer. You can also participate in the Susan G. Koman Race for the Cure in Memphis. It is scheduled October 29, 2016. If you are interested in this event, feel free to contact them at (901) 757-8686.

I hope that you have registered to vote. Now is the time to make sure that you are prepared to vote in the upcoming election. We all have a vote in deciding the future of our country. We so often hear the slogan “Your Voice Your Vote!” It is one way of thinking about the election process. Let’s use our voice to also encourage others to vote too.

This edition includes the following: an interview with our new Dean of Students, Dr. Justin Lawhead, some Commuter Student Appreciation Week (CSAW) highlights, a calendar of upcoming events, and an article that will enable you to understand what it means to be a breast cancer survivor and more.

If you do not know our new Dean of Students, read the article and then let him know that you read it. We also ask that you to visit the Adult and Commuter Student Services Office (UC 243) and if you are a student veteran, stop in and meet some of your comrades in the Veterans Resource Center (Pan Hellenic 110).

Best Regards!

Joy R. Stout, M.S., LPC, Director
Adult & Commuter Student Services and Veterans Resource Center
"If you survive breast cancer one second after the doctor tells you that you have it, you’re a survivor."

That is how Doctor Barbara Davis, a professor at the Fogelman College of Business & Economics, describes her fellow breast cancer survivors. A native Memphian, Davis just celebrated her 20-year anniversary of being cancer free. As one of the founders of a support group called Surviving Thriving African Americans Rallying Support (STAARS), she also helps fight the stigma that comes along with being diagnosed with breast cancer. Davis’s group meets the first Saturday of every month at Delta Medical Center, and all meetings are open to all ethnicities, genders and sexual orientations. To prove that point, she said an Iranian male used to attend meetings regularly during his treatment.

Survivors and co-survivors (friends and family members of survivors) are welcome to attend all meetings; as is anyone else who would like to. According to Davis, her friends were crucial for her battle with cancer. In the days before the Internet, one friend sent her a box full of resources for cancer treatment. And if the stigma of the diagnosis prevents a survivor from coming forward, she said, “Co-survivors have to help.” Partners, family and friends, she said, are crucial for “easing survivors into the group.” But, she said, newcomers are “usually comfortable in the first three minutes.”

Davis started STAARS with a friend and fellow survivor eighteen years ago. Since then, the meeting has blossomed into a full fledged support group. Some meetings are information sessions. Davis said that many survivors in the African American community are unaware of many government benefits that they become eligible for after receiving a diagnosis. All cancer survivors automatically qualify for TennCare under the Americans with Disabilities Act, she said.

STAARS promotes community involvement through a grant from the Susan G. Komen Foundation for which it has qualified every year since 2005. Women and men from the group help with things such as encouraging women to utilize the free mammograms provided through the grant. Group members are also in attendance at health fairs and give presentations throughout the Memphis area.
An Interview with Dr. Justin Lawhead, Our New Dean of Students

Tell us about you.

I'm originally from Pennsylvania. I went to undergraduate and graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh. I moved to Wilmington, North Carolina and spent six years there working with campus activities, leadership programs, and the student government association. Then I moved to Kent State and did some work with commuter student programs, multicultural orientation, student government, and student programming. I got the job at the UofM in 2003 as the Associate Dean for Leadership and Involvement. I helped build a significant leadership program. I also revamped some of our student allocation processes; I looked at increasing Greek life. I was lucky enough to be appointed Dean of Students in early August.

I like Memphis a lot. It reminds me a lot of home. Pittsburg and Memphis are similar in many ways. They're both by water; they both have this kind of grit to them; they're both going through transitions in communities.

How is the new job going so far?

It’s good, it’s a bit of a challenge because I still have to do the job downstairs in Student Leadership. It is a heavy load but an okay load. I love the students here and I love the work. If you’re not busy then you’re not having the impact you should have with students.

Have things changed since you were a student?

The exchange of information is just tremendous. When I went to college, you went to a gigantic job board on the fourth floor of the student union; and you fought other students for the information. It was really survival of the fittest in regards to obtaining employment. There was not this rich network helping get students plugged in.

I think students have higher expectations from their school. When I was in school, there were certainly things that we didn’t agree with, but we weren’t as vocal in our opposition. I think when you raise price points as high as you do, then those price points generate responses and they generate input from students. I don’t really like that phrase, “I’m paying your salary.” But, I think the frame of that is, “I’m expending a lot of resources, I have expectations about a level of service.”

What is on your agenda as the new Dean of Students?

We have some thoughts on prevention programs as they relate to sexual assault awareness and sexual assault prevention. I want to be a dean that’s accessible. I want try to incrementally change the appearance of the office to an office that has to deal with conduct but also an office that serves as an advocate for students. I want to create an interaction with students that helps them understand that, if they want to provide suggestions and positive change, that they can consider this office as a starting point. You’ll see my engagement at multiple events. I’m being intentional about saying no to some meetings because I need to listen to students. I’m doing a lot with student government about campus life change and campus life enhancement. I want people to know that I’m involved with those conversations as well.

Do you have any advice for our adult, commuter and veteran students?

For an adult and or commuter student, time is always a challenge. I would say that we are here to help them. Try to maximize this learning experience. Use the services of this office. I know (ACSS Director) Ms. Stout is very passionate about adults and is willing to help students maneuver the continued on back
University.

I had some really good conversations with the veterans at the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) yesterday. They met with Dr. M. David Rudd and voiced some compliments and concerns. Our country has been at war for thirteen years and we will continue to see veterans on our campus, probably in increasing amounts. I think the leadership of the organization is tremendously forward thinking. I would say to veterans that we still have work to do, but we have staff and students that are committed to improvement. Things like Town Hall with the President reflect the institutional commitment, too.

Is there anything else that you would like to add?

You’ll see that, as my schedule lightens up in the next couple of months, I’m going to be intentional about scheduling meetings with students; something like Pizza with the Dean where students can come to me and give me some input about what they would like this office to focus on. Know that I’ll be around. I may need to be in my office working on projects at various times, but I’m trying to change what students think about some aspects of the dean of students office.

Get Involved with Student Organizations!

Adult Student Association
Jaime Ross, President
asa.uofm@gmail.com

Commuter Student Association
Stephen Helms, President
commuterstudents@memphis.edu

Student Veterans Association
Joey Scott, President
djscott1@memphis.edu

Homecoming 2016

IMPORTANT DATES AND TIMES
Saturday, October 22
Paint the Town Blue, all day, (Respective Locations)

Sunday, October 23
Women’s Volleyball vs. Tulane, 1 p.m., Elma Roane Fieldhouse

Monday, October 24
SAC Homecoming Kickoff, Noon-3 p.m., UC Fountain
AC Comedy Show, 7 p.m., Michael D. Rose Theatre

Tuesday, October 25
SAC Turnpike Signs, UC Atrium
The Million Meals Tiger Challenge, 11 a.m., UC Lawn
Tigers LipSync, 7 p.m., Michael D. Rose Theatre

Wednesday, October 26
Banner Voting Competition, Noon-3 p.m., UC Atrium
St. Jude Up ’til Dawn Letter Sending Party, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., UC Ballroom

Thursday, October 27
UC Takeover, 11 a.m., University Center
Where’s Baby TJ?, Noon, Various Locations
Flag Football Tournament, 3 p.m., UC Lawn
NPHC Homecoming Step Show, 7:30 p.m., Michael D. Rose Theatre

Friday, October 28
Parade Line-Up, 3:45 p.m., Zach Curlin St.
Homecoming Parade, 5:30 p.m., Main Campus
Bluff City Bash, following parade, Alumni Mall Lawn

Saturday, October 29
Homecoming Game, TBA, Liberty Bowl