

June 2023

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2022 STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

The University Staff Excellence awards recognize individuals who have distinguished themselves in their roles and among their peers through the course of their daily assignments and activities. Along with well-deserved recognition from the campus community, there is also a cash award, made possible through the Jessie H. Morrison endowment.

The Jessie H. Morrison Award is the highest award that a staff member can receive. This award goes to an employee who has worked at Southern Miss for at least twenty (20) years, who exhibits the highest standards of professionalism in their position, and who significantly contributes not only to the Southern Miss community but to the broader community.

### Office Personnel

Connie Geske                      Senior Financial Specialist – iTech Administration

### Professional

Tracy Barnhill                      Director of Graduate School Operations – Graduate School  
Jo Ann Johnson                      Research Integrity Manager – Vice President for Research

### Jessie H. Morrison

Rodger Jackson                      Assoc Director of Facilities and Operations – Housing and Residence Life  
Belinda Patterson                      Operations and Event Manager – Parking and Transit Services  
Brandi Soule                              Manager Customer Services – iTech Administration

## REMINDER: APPROVING MONTHLY LEAVE

We would like to remind all supervisors of the importance of approving time online for monthly employees on a timely basis. The employee's leave balances will not update until the approvals are processed; therefore, frequently employees mistakenly think they have more time than they really do because their remaining balance is not properly updated. As a result, this has caused some employees to go into the negative when they attempt to use time they do not actually have. Also, it's harder for a manager to remember when a person was out and should have used leave if a considerable time has passed. A best practice is to send a calendar reminder to all employees to have their time updated by a certain day of each month so you can then go behind to approve.

## COMPENSATION GUIDELINE UPDATES

Revised compensation guidelines are now posted on the [HR website](#). Most of the changes were to simplify the procedures; however, the most significant change requires that **all additional pay for staff** (interim pay, performing additional duties, one-time payments) **must be submitted to HR in advance prior to communicating with the employee**. HR will review for consistency with the guidelines and alignment throughout the institution. If the department head and HR are not able to come to agreement, the matter may be escalated to the Senior Officer for further review.

Other changes include all offers over maximum must be approved by the President (previously more than 10% of max), and the FAQs are now within the same document instead of two separate documents (be sure to view the charts starting on page 5 for a simple overview of the approval process).

If you have questions about these revised guidelines or you would like to submit an additional pay request, please reach out to Kourtney Stookey, at 5-4581, or [Kourtney.Stookey@usm.edu](mailto:Kourtney.Stookey@usm.edu).

## UPCOMING HR TRAINING

**Performance Management Education Session      Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> @ 2p (1 hr)**

*Audience: Anyone in a managerial role*

Summary: Overview of the Staff Performance Management process for supervisors.

RSVP: [Miranda.Newman@usm.edu](mailto:Miranda.Newman@usm.edu) to receive the link to the training.

**Creating a Harassment-Free Environment      Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> @ 10a (1 hr)**

*Audience: All employees*

Summary: Understanding each employee's rights and responsibilities for creating a work environment free of harassment.

RSVP: [Miranda.Newman@usm.edu](mailto:Miranda.Newman@usm.edu) to receive the link to the training.

**Performance Management Education Session      Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> @ 10a (1 hr)**

*Audience: Anyone in a managerial role*

Summary: Overview of the Staff Performance Management process for supervisors.

RSVP: [Miranda.Newman@usm.edu](mailto:Miranda.Newman@usm.edu) to receive the link to the training.

**Staff Compensation Overview      Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup> @ 2p (1 hr)**

*Audience: All staff*

Summary: Our Sr AVP for HR, Krystyna Varnado, will review the staff compensation guidelines and answer questions.

RSVP: [krystyna.varnado@usm.edu](mailto:krystyna.varnado@usm.edu) to receive the link to the training.

In addition to the above, HR has posted our [full training library](#) on our website with a complete list of all of the available training that can be requested through Miranda Newman, HR Partner, on-demand.

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

A reminder that all benefit-eligible employees have access to our Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To register online, go to [GuidanceResources.com](https://www.guidanceresources.com) or the app GuidanceNow, and use the Organization Web ID COM589. When it asks for your company name, enter UNIVE (a box should pop up with USM for you to select). In addition to web resources, membership also comes with telephonic access to talk to a counselor, financial advisor, or legal advisor: 800-272-7255. Click [here](#) to view a short video about the EAP.

Join us for an upcoming live webinar from our EAP.

### Using Reason to Resolve Conflict

Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00pm (1 hour)

*Audience: Anyone*

*Summary:* Whether they take place in the workplace or in one's personal life, conflicts are inevitable; however, that does not mean that they must always be damaging. When emotions are understood and reason is used to handle conflict, the result can actually be strengthened relationships rather than damaged ones. This workshop discusses how you can replace pure emotion with rational decision-making when dealing with conflict.

Please click the link below to register for the webinar or email Miranda Brumfield at [Miranda.Newman@usm.edu](mailto:Miranda.Newman@usm.edu) to RSVP.

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/409784016372874070>

## HR LOVES USM BASEBALL



*University HR taking a quick ice cream break to cheer on Southern Miss baseball!*

**If you have questions about any of the information contained in this HR Update, please contact our main line at 6-4050 or your HR Partner for more information. SMTTT!**