

June 2024

CONGRATULATIONS STAFF EXCELLENCE WINNERS

The University Staff Excellence awards recognize staff members that exhibit exemplary commitment and dedication toward their position and The University of Southern Mississippi. The recipients demonstrate integrity, a positive attitude toward work responsibilities, co-workers, and customers, serve as a role model for others, take initiative and carry out additional responsibilities beyond regular job assignments for the good of the campus community and have a team player attitude.



Michelle Green
Custodian II
Gulf Park Physical Plant



Jamerrill McGilvery
Grounds Lead
Physical Plant



Crystal Ingram
Ast to the Dean
University Libraries



Evon Swan
Program Coordinator
School of Interdiscip
Studies & Prof Dev



Todd McCall
Ast Athletic Director
for Sports Medicine



Jessie H Morrison Award
Tetyana Suprun
Custodian III
Physical Plant



Jessie H Morrison Award
Mike Fulce
Mgr Database &
PeopleSoft Admin- iTech

Use this [link](#) to view all award recipients from the Faculty & Staff Awards Ceremony

ELECTRONIC PAF UPDATE

Phase 2 – Student Hires and Rehires Coming Soon!

Our office will be releasing information on Electronic PAFs roll-out of Phase 2 in the near future. Please keep your eyes out for e-mail communications and invitations to training sessions on new electronic processes.

Enhancements

Enhancements have recently been added to Electronic PAF in SOARHR. Supervisors and Proxies will be able to access information and instructions on using these enhancements in the canvas training module. Keep an eye out for messages from Canvas about additional content added to the Electronic PAF training module.

If you are a supervisor or a recently designated proxy and have yet to be added to the Electronic PAF canvas shell, please e-mail kelly.jamespenot@usm.edu.

RESILIENCE APP- FREE!

What is the Driven Resilience App?

Driven is a virtual coach in your pocket designed to help you manage stress, increase motivation, and proactively build mental wellness. The app is fun, engaging, and fully digital!

How Does it Work?

- It all starts with measurement through a fast, 3-minute resilience questionnaire to measure your resilience across the PR Resilience Domains.
- Based on measurement results, a personalized self-paced training course starts.
- There are short, unique daily chats that quickly help you build healthy resilience skills and habits.
- Includes interactive daily activities and useful techniques that can be used as needed.
- Help is available whenever needed through the AI-powered chat.
- Re-measurement can be completed on a regular basis to track progress and prove the benefits.
- Your participation in the app is completely private and no one can access your results or monitor your usage of the app.

Who is Eligible?

Benefit-eligible faculty and staff.

How Do I Access the App?

To access the code to the Driven app for your free access, complete this [form](#). HR also holds regular sessions to learn more about the resources available on the app and to explore the various domains of resilience in more depth.

NEGATIVE LEAVE BALANCES

Supervisors should not approve leave for employees who do not have the leave accrued to cover the time. State regulations prohibit us from paying time that has not been accrued. If an employee requests time off but does not have an adequate leave accrual, your choices are: 1) Deny the request (per 6.1 Scheduling Time-Off of the Employee Handbook). 2) Allow unpaid time (for non-exempt employees only). 3) Use flexible scheduling (per 5.4.4 Flextime Work Schedule of the Employee Handbook). 4) Contact your HR Partner to discuss.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FOR STAFF- FINAL REMINDER!

What?

A performance management program has been implemented at USM for all staff. This new program will replace any existing performance evaluation processes already in place.

Why?

Until now, USM has had no official performance management process for staff. Some departments did not do performance evaluations at all. Others did them but it was inconsistent from department to department. Additionally, performance evaluations are no longer considered best practice, and a new contemporary approach to performance management was desired.

Who?

All staff positions.

How?

Information has been posted on the [HR website](#), which includes a recorded information session that all staff are asked to watch. The information session is just 15 minutes and explains all the details of the process including why we are doing this, how it will work, and what you can expect next. All of the supplemental forms and information are also included on the site, including a supervisor toolkit.

Where?

All of the information is on the [HR website](#).

When?

As announced last year, all initial performance meetings are expected to take place **no later than June 2024**. This deadline provided all supervisors with a year to implement the program, and now we are at the finish line.

If you missed one of the many live training sessions HR has offered for supervisors over the last year and have questions beyond the material that is posted on our website, please feel free to reach out to your HR Partner for assistance.

POLICY UPDATES

Policy

Description

3.4.3 Notice Requirements	Revised- Updated to comply with state regulations that the last day of work must be actually worked- not leave- unless on an approved leave of absence (FMLA, military, etc.).
6.16 No Work During Leave	New- Added for clarification.
6.17 Bereavement Leave	New- Added to direct people to the information on Bereavement Leave.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

We ask all employees to make sure that you have emergency contact information on file. You can use this [link](#) to submit your information, which will go to HR for your personnel file. We also encourage you to provide this information directly to your supervisor.

USM employees who are currently taking classes or have taken classes in the past have SOAR accounts and can update your emergency contact information there, as well. Emergency Contacts can be found in the “My Profile” section of the Student Dashboard.

Supervisors- please share this information with your faculty and staff in your department.

TRANSITIONING FROM 12-MO to 9-MO REMINDER

Administrators returning to faculty and transitioning from a 12-month administrative position to a 9-month faculty position should be prepared to enter a “without pay” status during the transition time of July and August. Administrators transitioning back to faculty will return to the faculty pay cycle with the first check issued at the end of September. Additionally, as there will be a break in pay, a portion of insurance deductions will be missed. The missed deductions will be taken from the check that will be issued at the end of September.

Please review the employee handbook, section 6.2 Personal Leave.

Administrators on a 12-month contract who revert to a 9-month teaching position will no longer accrue personal leave. The personal leave accrued will be frozen and not available for use at any time unless resuming a 12-month position. For those enrolled in PERS the unused leave will be credited to PERS when employment with USM ends. For those enrolled in ORP, personal leave has no value.

If you would like more information about your transition and how your time may be impacted, please contact Kelly James Penot, HR Manager at Kelly.jamespenot@usm.edu.

SUMMER POLICY FOR STUDENT WORKERS

(This policy does not apply to Work Study Students and Graduate Assistants)

To remain employed as a student worker during the summer, students must meet one of the following:

- Be enrolled full-time (12) during the summer semester.
 - Have been enrolled full-time (12) during the spring and returning to full-time (12) in the fall.
 - Applied for summer graduation and the application is showing in SOAR
- *If these conditions are not met, they will need to be hired as part-time staff which will require a job posting in Cornerstone and a background check prior to the student continuing work.*
- Student workers enrolled less than half time (6 hours) in the summer will lose their FICA exemption status.
 - Student workers can work up to 20 hours per week regardless of enrollment during the summer semester.
 - If graduating student workers continue working after final exams, they must be hired as part-time staff which will require a job posting in Cornerstone and a background check before the student continues work.

PAF AND PDS DATES FOR FALL 2024

The following deadlines have been set to ensure that all faculty and new or continuing Adjunct appointments are completed in time for the fall semester. All dates are the latest date the forms should be received by the specified office. Please be aware that until the fully completed paperwork is received by Human Resources and processed, the employee will not appear in SOAR, and if new, will not have a USM email address.

Monday, July 1, 2024

PAF and PDS in Provost Office. (Should include faculty qualifications forms and accompanying documentation as needed and/or Provost signature)

Monday, July 15, 2024

Final fully signed form for Fall semester due in Human Resources

2024-2025 Academic Year

Faculty Contracts: August 16, 2024 – May 13, 2025

Dates for Personnel Action Forms and Personnel Data Sheets:

Intercession – August 5, 2024 – August 20, 2024 - Paid out in August

Full Fall Semester – August 16, 2024 – December 16, 2024 – Paid out September through December

Fall Session I – August 16, 2024 – October 9, 2024 – Paid out September through October

Fall Session II – October 10, 2024 – December 16, 2024 – Paid out November through December

2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR GA PAPERWORK

Full Academic Year – PAF Effective dates August 14th, 2024 - May 13th, 2025.

PAF is due to the Graduate School no later than Friday, June 21st, 2024

HIRING PROCESS REQUIREMENTS- REMINDER

Per our 2023 Affirmative Action Plan Good Faith Efforts, the following changes to the hiring process were enacted:

- 1) Training on the hiring process for staff is required for all hiring managers.
 - Anyone with supervisory responsibility has been assigned the course “Staff Hiring Process” in [Canvas](#), which must be completed prior to posting a position in Cornerstone. University HR cannot post a position until they are able to confirm in Canvas that the hiring manager has completed the training.
 - Hiring managers are responsible for ensuring that all participants in the hiring process utilize the staff hiring toolkit and watch the “Staff Hiring Process” training available on the [HR website](#) (though only the training for the hiring manager will be tracked in Canvas and required prior to the posting).
 - Training requirements for faculty searches have been communicated through the Provost.
- 2) All search documentation must be returned to University HR at the end of the search process.
 - At the close of a search- whether an offer is accepted or the search is cancelled- all official documentation from the search must be submitted to University Human Resources, who will become the official keeper of the records.
 - Official documentation is defined in the “Staff Hiring Process” training and the Staff Hiring Toolkit (see also “Staff Hiring Process At-A-Glance”).
 - Documentation for faculty searches should also be submitted to University Human Resources at the close of the search.

If you have questions about these new requirements, please contact Kourtney Stookey, HR Partner, at 5-4581 or Kourtney.stookey@usm.edu for further assistance.

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.

This month's features include:

- [Benefits of Quitting](#)
- [Women's Health Awareness](#)
- [Dangers of Loneliness](#)
- [Incorporating Exercise Into Your Day](#)
- [Physical Fitness Assessment](#)
- [How Your EAP Can Help: Preventing Burnout](#)
- [How Your EAP Can Help: Easing Anxiety](#)
- [Video - What to Expect When Reaching Out](#)

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!