TRiO

STUDENT COWBELl WELL

A look into mental health services

Maroon Meals

Tackling food insecurity on campus

Meet the 2019 Homecoming King

Maroon Traditions

Mississippi State University | Student Affairs Magazine

new TRiO space

Student support services

A new location for student support

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Cowbell well

Our response to COVID-19

The State of Black Men Symposium

Outstanding student leadership

Bully’s closet & pantry’s new spot

Dawg Days

A warm welcome back to campus
Each year, all of MSU comes together to welcome students back to campus. Students can stay busy with events like Shades of Starkville (featured above); URec the Day with University Recreation; Grill on the Drill with Housing and Residence Life; a welcome back concert featuring Colony House with Music Makers; and many more.
Maroon Meals is a campus food alert program that notifies Mississippi State students about availability of food on campus. The food is typically from an event held on campus, and the program informs students of the location of the food and how long it will be there. A notification is sent to students through their myState app, letting students know that food is ready to be picked up.

Maroon Meals is a part of the MSU Food Security Network (FSN), created to connect students in need to food resources within the community.

The FSN provides a set schedule of distribution for local food pantries, as well as on-campus opportunities for students to obtain food. These opportunities include Maroon Meals, Bully’s Closet and Pantry, as well as the Block-by-Block program which provides students in need with block meals to be used at MSU’s dining halls.

Students can connect to the network online or through the Dean of Students Office, where they will find an application to be a part of the FSN.

Bully’s Closet and Pantry opened its doors in early 2020, offering food, professional clothing and necessary toiletries—all free of charge—to MSU students with a valid student ID. National data indicates approximately 30% of all college students are in need of food and necessities. Through this program, Mississippi State can lessen the financial stressors some students face daily, allowing them to focus on the important goal of attaining their college degree.

Located on campus at 120 Morgan Avenue, Bully’s Closet and Pantry is very convenient for students to access. Students simply present their student ID card and gain access to the resources available to them, which include nonperishable items, fresh produce, bread/bagels, frozen meals, baby products and food, along with dry-cleaned business attire that the students can keep.

As a part of MSU’s Food Security Network (FSN), in partnership with the Vice President for Student Affairs Office, Dean of Students Office, and Dining Facilities, Bully’s Closet and Pantry is just one of the many initiatives in place to help food insecurity on our campus.

Bully’s Closet and Pantry is also engaging with students by hosting events. These include cooking classes and snack prep courses, where students can be educated on how to use the items from the pantry to make full meals or healthy snacks. With the impact of COVID-19, Bully’s Closet and Pantry was able to remain open and continue to provide food to students.

New initiatives were created during the summer including “Fresh Food Fridays” where students could get fresh produce from Bully’s Closet and Pantry on Fridays; and a collaboration with Domino’s Pizza where students could get pizza on Tuesdays.

Carson is a woman of many talents. She has really helped streamline several of our design processes and helps to teach her peers about those processes and the reasons behind them. She loves Mississippi State, especially Student Affairs, and is looking to further her education by studying to become a professional in the field of higher education. She is a super-talented designer and has created hundreds of pieces of original work for all the departments in the division. She’s worked on designing and writing for this year’s Maroon Traditions. Carson is always willing to lend a helping hand and is a true asset to our team both in talent and in leadership. She is truly deserving of this award - she is an outstanding student employee!
The K9 unit at Mississippi State University Police Department consists of three explosive detection K9s, Bach, Migel, and Bessi, and their handlers. Sergeant Wesley Bunch is the proud handler for Bach. Bach, a seven-year-old Belgian Malinois, came to Mississippi State from the Czech Republic where he was born and trained in basic obedience. Bach and the other explosive detection K9s on campus are utilized in both proactive and reactive efforts to ensure that the campus community remains safe. Sergeant Bunch expressed how blessed the Mississippi State University community is to have leadership that is focused on campus safety. “The K9s are undeniably a great asset to the university, but they are also shared with the local area as well. As a whole, our K9 unit has been called on to assist agencies from all over the Golden Triangle area with everything from bomb threats, to community outreach programs, to assist in the apprehension of potentially dangerous criminals, to help to locate missing children, as well as for various presentations.”

Sergeant Wesley Bunch’s path to law enforcement started at the University of Southern Mississippi where he studied criminal justice. After graduation Bunch worked two years at a law enforcement agency in South Mississippi until deciding he wanted to attend graduate school while simultaneously remaining in the workforce. Since coming to Mississippi State University four years ago, Bunch has finished his master’s degree and is currently pursuing a PhD. His favorite aspect of the job is working as Bach’s K9 handler. “As far as my relationship with Bach goes, it’s about as good as it gets! Being Bach’s handler is not like having a pet. Bach is literally everywhere I go.” Bunch says. Sergeant Bunch and Bach’s relationship goes far beyond work. As Sgt. Bunch said, Bach is with him everywhere he goes.

Bach’s favorite activities outside of work include playing with the ball, playing tug-of-war, and listening to the radio. Sergeant Bunch and Bach’s favorite parts of the shift are when they walk through buildings on campus. “I really enjoy the social aspect of it, and Bach enjoys getting attention and having people throw his tennis ball,” Bunch says. Sergeant Bunch’s most rewarding part of the job is to see the fruits of positive relationships created between a dog and the community. “To anyone that sees K9 Bach and me out and about on campus, come up and talk to us! The one thing that I would like to remind the community about is to always ask the handler before trying to pet or play with the K9s. About 99.9% of the time we will let you interact with our dogs, but if we are working and in the middle of handling a situation, the last thing that we want is for someone to take our dog’s attention away from the situation. But, like I said, if we are not working, the answer will almost always be yes!”

In response to COVID-19 the efforts of the emergency management team have reached new territory. “The response to that is unprecedented and there are manuals on how to navigate through these challenges. We have become very effective at tele-work and have also strengthened our relationships with other universities since we are all learning our way through this together.” The steps to sign up for emergency management notifications can be found at http://www.emergency.msstate.edu/text-messaging/.

Brent Crocker, Mississippi State University’s emergency manager, administers the emergency management plans for MSU’s campus and community. The emergency notification system, Maroon Alert, is constantly enhanced and updated to provide the most useful information in the case of an emergency at MSU or in the Starkville area. After signing up for Maroon Alert, notifications are sent using multiple paths including text messages, emails, phone calls, and voicemails.

Crocker said, “We’ve received helpful data that shows our emergency notifications are reaching students faster than before.” The emergency management efforts also include training on a wide variety of topics: Emergency Preparation, Severe Weather, Active Shooter, De-escalation, and Fire Emergencies, to name a few. This training provides guidance for preventing an emergency as well as how to respond to one. “The training on campus receives positive feedback and I have requests for more training. The current push is to have these trainings available online,” said Crocker.

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Bulldog Family Weekend has been an annual event at Mississippi State University for the past three years, put on by the Division of Student Affairs. Parents of freshmen are invited to sign up for and attend a weekend full of activities on- and off campus. Many MSU students have parents who have never seen the university or the city of Starkville before, and this weekend-long event was the perfect opportunity for families to experience our great university and city.

The weekend started with a welcome reception at the Hunter Henry Center. Different campus associations had tables with information that was given to each family. Families were encouraged to socialize and grab a bite to eat from the snack platters in the center of the room. During the luncheon, Bully, MSU’s mascot, came for a visit and took pictures with students and their families. The next day, Mississippi State hosted a watch party at the Colvard Student Union for the away football game against Texas A&M. Families could sit, watch the game, and cheer on the Bulldogs while enjoying a delicious lunch prepared for them. They also had tables set up with cowbell decorating and had floor games, like cornhole and giant checkers, set up right outside the main room.

Dr. Cat Walker, Assistant Dean of Students, was the organizer of Bulldog Family Weekend. Walker said the purpose of the weekend was so families can meet other families, it gives the school a chance to showcase numerous athletic teams, and it is a good way for people to get to know the school better, all while visiting with their family.

“We recognized that there was a group of parents and families that just hadn’t been connected to the university yet. We wanted to give them an opportunity to come to campus and spend a weekend and get connected to the school,” Walker said.

Over the past years this event has received a lot of positive feedback. So positive, they have been able to produce this event three times now. Each year the director tried to diversify the weekend by incorporating different activities happening on campus, but at the same time, trying to not include so much that it represents an unrealistic weekend in Starkville.

“We try to create an environment that is not over-programmed, so that students can spend time with their family members doing things that they normally do,” Walker said.

All in all, Bulldog Family Weekend was a success for both MSU students and their families. Students got to spend time with their families, and show them why they are excited to be a part of the Bulldog community. Their families got a chance to become more familiar with the university. Bulldog Family Weekend is an event that is valuable for students and their families.
The Celebration of First Generation Scholars is an event held annually to commemorate the passing of the Higher Education Act of 1965. This act paved the way for many first-generation and under-resourced scholars to attend institutions of higher learning and earn a 4-year degree. Each year MSU finds a way to celebrate these students and acknowledge their accomplishments as the first individuals from their families to attend and complete a higher education program. For the last few years, the event has sought to celebrate, praise, and acknowledge these students through an array of programs. In 2019 the Celebration of First Generation Scholars took place from November 4–November 8 with several days of activities and community for students. First-Gen scholars were invited to sign the First-Gen banner that asked the question "As a first-generation scholar who/what inspires me the most?" There was also a luncheon open to all faculty, staff, and students, along with a fall festival on the Drill Field.

TRiO programs are designed to help students overcome environmental, social, cultural, and academic barriers to higher education. These programs include Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, and Educational Opportunity Centers.

At MSU we have a new designated space on campus for students enrolled in our programs to gather and meet with advisors. One of the coordinators in Student Support Services, Rob Fleming, said, "We really desire for this space to be a haven and resource hub for our first-generation students on campus. We use this area to conduct programming, meetings, and provide a welcoming, comfortable space for our students to do work, research, and social network building."

The new Student Support Services space is located in the center of campus near the Colvard Student Union beside Moe’s and Subway. It is accessible for all Student Support Services students who want to use the space to study, hang out with friends, or talk to advisors about their classes, assignments, or anything else college-related.

The Student Support Services office takes on the task of helping students build financial literacy, explore additional financial opportunities, apply for graduate and professional schools, develop proficient study and test taking habits, provide tutoring, plan future career goals, and navigate the complexities of higher education. They serve between 160–180 first generation and/or low-income students annually. Student Support Services programs report a 96% graduation and 94% retention rate for students served.
residence hall renovation

McKee and Sessums Residence Halls both underwent a summer 2019 upgrade to improve the quality of the living environment for students. Improvements included new paint and flooring throughout the facilities and shower rooms modification with new tile and showerheads. Added to the community decor are vinyl art pieces of Mississippi State’s notable locations to help infuse State pride and appreciation of our university.

ABOVE: Lobby area of McKee Hall with a new mural featuring the statue from in front of the Library.

BELOW: New floors were placed in all rooms in both McKee and Sessums.

ABOVE (LEFT): The showers were refinished with new tile and hardware.

ABOVE (RIGHT) & BELOW: Murals featuring several campus landmarks don the hallways of both residence halls.
Mississippi State’s Men of Excellence student organization presented its biannual State of Black Men Symposium on February 18, 2020 at the Colvard Student Union in celebration of Black History Month. The theme was “Breaking Barriers But Accepting Challenges.” The day-long event, sponsored by the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center, was free and open to the public.

The event’s purpose is to encourage, develop, and impact African-American males and their success at Mississippi State University. Although the symposium caters to African-American males, Timothy Hopkins, associate director of HCDC, said, “Our hope is that our entire Mississippi State student family will attend.” Ra’Sheda Forbes, director of HCDC, said the symposium is not solely for black male students, but rather, for anyone invested in the success of students. “This symposium particularly addresses the issues of black men because there are various aspects of social structures and constructs that impede on the success of black men,” Forbes said. “This symposium will help contextualize the challenges and provide tools to nurture an inclusive environment.”

The symposium was broken up into various speakers and ended with a keynote address given by motivational speaker, leadership trainer, and author Dr. Samuel Jones. Dr. Jones spoke on his five ways for anyone to own their future. The steps are: to show up; to show up on time; to show up on time with a plan; to show up on time with a plan and a commitment; and to show up on time with a plan and a commitment to beat your competition. The message was emotional, thought-provoking, and inspirational. Dr. Jones left with a standing ovation and a cowbell. The ten different sessions and Jones’ keynote attracted around 300 people.

The Planning and Assessment office-in conjunction with the Vice President for Student Affairs Office-assists with strategic planning at the division and departmental levels and also facilitates assessment activities and special projects to achieve common goals and objectives.

The Division of Student Affairs began an 8-part series guided by the NASPA/ACPA competencies for the 2019/2020 school year titled “Social Justice and Inclusion.” Programming for this series was created specifically to reach a foundational level in social justice and inclusion. “With such a diverse team as a resource for programming and marketing, we were able to provide rich and meaningful sessions,” says Ogorchukwu Johnson, with the Planning and Assessment Office for the Division of Student Affairs.

Johnson also spoke on Mississippi State having the honor of hosting the 2020 SECSAO (Southeast Chief Student Affairs Officers) conference in February 2020, having the opportunity to connect with other schools while showcasing our bulldog spirit. “During this event, best practices and other aspects of Student Affairs are discussed by top representatives from various schools in the SEC and Southeast. From holding dinner at the Davis Wade stadium, continuous discussion sessions at The Mill Conference Center, to having volunteers from different departments within the division, we were gracious hosts and look forward to next year,” says Johnson.

The Planning and Assessment office also organizes other events centered around professional development. An example of this is the new employee onboarding, held twice a year in September and March.

The office shares information for online professional development opportunities with the division, and interdepartmental collaborations for further development. The benefits of ongoing professional development are endless. Johnson stated, “Professional development is a continuous way to stay connected to the common goal as professionals assess knowledge and skills necessary for work towards student learning and success.” The goal of these events is to generate ideas among colleagues with diverse perspectives and to encourage independent, interactive learning.
The biggest highlight from homecoming was the Homecoming King winner. MSU senior, Spencer Kirkpatrick, stole the hearts and votes of everyone and won Homecoming King. The extra-special part about his win was that he was a part of Mississippi State’s ACCESS program. Assistant Director of ACCESS, Becca Spencer, said Kirkpatrick was encouraged and supported by his friends to run for homecoming king.

“With encouragement from some of his friends, Spencer decided to run for Homecoming King when they opened up the nomination/application process. Everyone felt he truly embodied the spirit of MSU and that he should pursue it,” Spencer said.

Kirkpatrick was known for his involvement during his time at Mississippi State University. Spencer said he was involved with Special Olympics College Unified Sports league. He also attended many of the fraternity and sorority social events. His story was so moving that it was picked up in the news nationally as well as internationally. Becca Spencer mentioned some of the media sources that shared his story.

“I know there were a lot including Southern Living Magazine, USA Today, US News, Yahoo, and many of our state news sources like the Clarion Ledger.”

The support Kirkpatrick had from his family and friends was unlimited. MSU can only be thanked for being so inclusive for all students and for creating environments where events like homecoming can be enjoyed by everyone. There really was “No Place Like Homecoming.”

This year, Mississippi State University’s Homecoming theme took a turn towards the classics. The Student Association’s Directors of Homecoming and Pageants, Riley Byars and Laken Winstead, decided upon the theme “There’s No Place Like Homecoming”, and this year, homecoming lived up to that theme in every way.

Many events were planned for homecoming week. One traditional event was Pancakes on the Patio. Students could go to the Colvard Student Union patio and get free pancakes.

Another event during homecoming week was the National Pan-Hellenic Council Step Show and the homecoming concert, featuring Georgia R&B artist Jacquees. And, of course, the homecoming football game on Saturday where the homecoming court is showcased.

Laken Winstead, one of the directors of Homecoming and Pageants, said her favorite part of homecoming week was game day. The homecoming court rode on the trolley bus around campus to be introduced to different people. She also mentioned that it was a cold night, but that didn’t take away from the grace each court member had.

“It was a cold, cold night, but a night the court took with such grace. They represented MSU with class and dignity,” Winstead said.
VIRTUAL COUNSELING SERVICES
With COVID-19 greatly affecting all aspects of our lives, the Student Counseling Services team was determined to find a way to keep in touch with students and be available for them during these trying times. With the response to the spring closure of campus, counseling services was moved to a virtual platform through Doxy.me. Students who sought these services could visit the counseling website and enter a virtual waiting room. From there a clinician would assess the clinical needs and concerns of the student and schedule a time for a virtual session with a clinician. Over the spring and summer months, an app called “My SSP” was utilized to keep in touch with out-of-state and international students seeking connection with the Student Counseling Services. These initial virtual assessments will continue throughout the fall semester as students return to campus, followed up by either a virtual session or an in-person session based on the student’s clinical assessment and concerns.

PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES
A new addition to MSU’s University Health Services is a partnership between outpatient provider Right Track Medical Group and the university’s John C. Longest Student Health Center. This partnership allows students to receive psychiatric evaluation, medication management, and mental health counseling on campus from Right Track Medical Group. Students can make free appointments to see the health center’s psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse practitioner who can give general care for common health issues, such as anxiety, depression, or attention deficit disorder. For specialized care, the health center refers students to the Right Track team. In conjunction with the Longest Student Health Center and Student Counseling Services, Right Track Medical Group helps provide accessible, quality mental health services to students.

SUPPORT GROUPS | GROUP THERAPY
All group activities began in March 2020 moved to virtual activities and these group meetings and workshops are held online in the fall semester. Additional classes such as “Coping with COVID” and “Transitioning to Online Learning” have been created and tailored to what students are experiencing at this time. Other workshops that will now be held online are “Changing Unhelpful Thoughts,” “Relationships 101,” and “The ABZzzzzz of Sleep.” Support Groups are offered for students covering a variety of topics. Support is provided to International Students through our Tea Talks series. Grief Support Group is also available for students who have lost a loved one. Group therapy is recommended for students who are interested in receiving clinician-led therapy in a support community. Group therapy communities are organized around shared experiences like previous trauma or conflict, and are only offered through a referral.

LET’S TALK PROGRAM
Let’s Talk is an outreach program that offers students convenient access to brief informal consultations with a Student Counseling Center clinician at different sites across campus. MSU students are encouraged to drop by and talk about what is important to them during a 15-20 minute conversation. Clinicians will listen to students’ concerns and may offer support, information, and resources. Let’s Talk consultations are held in different areas around campus each week and students are welcome to just walk into these spaces for a 15-20 minute informal consultation. Virtual sessions were made available for students to access as well. The goal of Let’s Talk is to provide a counseling outreach service to reduce the stigma and increase the access to collegiate counseling centers.
giving opportunities

Your support will ensure the success of the Food Security Network, Holmes Cultural Diversity Center Emergency Fund, Collegiate Recovery Community, and the Student Affairs General Fund. These programs help feed students on campus, provide safe spaces for our diverse community, support students in the recovery process, and benefit all who are a part of the student body as they continue to be a part of the Bulldog Family!

Bully’s Closet and Pantry assists in meeting the basic needs of students. As more and more students are facing uncertainty in their jobs, coursework, and futures, Bully’s Closet and Pantry continues to offer an outstretched hand of support in the most pressing times.

The Dr. Richard E. Holmes Cultural Diversity Center is dedicated to enhancing the cultural college experience of students at Mississippi State University. Your support will help establish a need-based scholarship for these students involved with the HCDC.

The Collegiate Recovery Community provides the all-inclusive college experience, helping students in recovery achieve success and excellence academically, professionally, and spiritually. Support in this area gives to programming for the CRC and scholarships for students involved.

The Division of Student Affairs’ central focus is student success and engagement. By donating to the division’s general fund you are contributing to the programs and services offered by our departments who are here to help you/your student achieve academic success, personal growth, and career goals.

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COVID-19’S IMPACT

DR. JEREMY BAHAM, ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

On January 6, 2020 Mississippi State University started classes in much the same manner that we have for decades. How quickly that sense of normalcy would vanish. By mid-February the university was canceling study abroad trips for the summer and looking at ways to limit travel for our university community. On March 9 our students began Spring Break, and they wouldn’t come back to campus this spring as the university made the decision to switch to all virtual instruction for the remainder of the semester. The way that the departments within University Health Services reacted to this crisis is an excellent example of the way Student Affairs continued to support our students and the greater university community.

It starts with the leadership provided during this time by the Executive Director of Health Services, Cliff Story, M.D. and the Directors of Student Counseling Services and Health Promotion and Wellness, Lu Switzer, M.S., LPC-S and Leah Pylate, Ph.D., respectively.

The Longest Student Health Center continued providing in person care for its patients even when the state of Mississippi mandated that only essential workers leave their homes. The Center continued to care for our students, even when those students were not physically in Starkville. They continue to take on more work by operating a COVID-19 hotline and providing testing for the virus, while continuing to see patients on a normal basis, many times working nights and weekends to serve the university community.

The Student Counseling Center found itself in strange territory when our students didn’t return from Spring Break. Because of strong leadership, many of our counselors had already enrolled in the course necessary to receive the certification for tele-counseling and completed it by the time Spring Break was over to stay in touch with students. SCS continues to utilize tele-counseling services as well as providing in-person services when appropriate.

Traditionally Health Promotion and Wellness is an office that provides outreach and education about health issues to our students. While continuing these educational services, they have added so much more to their plate. They have worked with a university task force and our marketing department to produce most of the public education outreach about COVID-19 for the university. During move-in week, they spearheaded the effort to screen everyone taking part in move-in for COVID-19; more than 22,000 ended up being screened that week. They have served as part of the team providing free drive-through COVID-19 testing for the university community. They have staffed hotlines and call centers above and beyond their normal duties.

The response by Mississippi State’s University Health Services has been exemplary, but if you ask any of the doctors, nurses, psychologists, counselors, health educators or other staff members associated with UHS they’re doing their jobs the same way they always have. How quickly that sense of normalcy would vanish. By mid-February the university was canceling study abroad trips for the summer and looking at ways to limit travel for our university community. They have staffed hotlines and call centers above and beyond their normal duties.

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Tyler Packer, the 2020-2021 Student Association President, was met with a transition period that looked a lot different than presidents before him. Despite COVID-19 interruptions to his first few months of presidency, Packer has stayed positive and learned more than he ever imagined. The senior political science major got his start with the Student Association through his involvement with Freshman Council, and only grew from there. His accomplishments include serving as a Road Runner; a campus-wide senator where he served on the Community and Governmental Relations committee; Vice President of his fraternity; an Orientation Leader; a member of Black Voices Gospel Choir; and Deputy Chief of Staff for the Student Association Executive Council. Packer says he’s most excited about his diversity platform. “This was a major focus for me and my team during the campaign, and with the current social and political climate I think that a time has never been better to do good work centered around fostering an open, inclusive, and spirited atmosphere for our students.” Packer also says he’s looking forward to investing in individual students. Packer said, “I am so excited to use this role to make relationships. I am a people person at heart and nothing excites me more than having the opportunity to invest in someone’s life experience.”

Genesis Ferris, a junior Criminology major, helped create the Native American Student Association (NASA) and served as the first President. NASA was formed in 2019 as a part of the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center to represent the Native American population on Mississippi State’s campus. The goal of the organization is to allow MSU’s Native American students to come together in a safe space to “discuss the issues that plague Native Americans nationwide as well as provide a safe space to gather,” says Ferris. Ferris decided to come to MSU because she enjoyed the atmosphere that the campus and its students have created, and now feels at home within HCDC with her involvement with NASA. Not only has Ferris been able to connect with fellow Native American students, but she has had the opportunity to engage with students of other races, ethnicities, and backgrounds while educating them about her background. Ferris feels, “[One] aspect that is important about this organization is that it allows for other races and ethnicities to learn about Native American culture and history.”
A senior Educational Psychology major, Marlon Boyd has been an active member in the Collegiate Recovery Community (CRC) since Spring 2019. When asked how the CRC has impacted his time at Mississippi State thus far, Boyd said, “Being a transfer student—especially one in recovery—presents some unique challenges when moving from a junior college to a university; however, joining the CRC made the process very smooth for me, as I was able to connect with others.” Boyd says the CRC and its members feel like family to him. Being both a transfer and a non-traditional student, Boyd was concerned that he wouldn’t fit in with the other students in the CRC, but he says he’s found his true friends in the group. Marlon is firm in his belief that recovery is possible for everyone. “After I got clean, I wanted to help others and show them that recovery is possible, but I knew that I needed the right education and training to help me reach my goals, which is partly why I decided to come to MSU and study Clinical Mental Health.” Boyd speaks fondly of his time at events he’s attended and trips he’s taken with the CRC, but he is most proud of his opportunity to speak to classes about the CRC as a resource on campus. “I love being able to tell students that if they have a problem they are not alone,” Boyd says. “I have learned how much the CRC cares about the students in recovery, and I really appreciate the family atmosphere with a focus on one’s wellbeing while keeping in sight the main goal: recovery is possible!”

Amoni Washington is one of MSU’s Health Service Volunteers (HSV) who works with Health Promotion and Wellness in MSU’s Longest Student Health Center. A senior Kinesiology major with a concentration in neuromechanics, Washington gained a passion for occupational therapy at a young age after helping a family member during recovery after an accident. Washington says, “HSV has truly influenced me to understand how I can find ways to interact and keep people going while I pursue my goal of becoming an Occupational Therapist.” Washington was first drawn to the Health Service Volunteer program after attending the Clothesline Project, a public violence awareness event, held annually by Health Promotion and Wellness. Since then, Washington claims working with HSV has helped her understand the importance of impact that physical and mental health issues can have on college students. Washington was named the Top Health Service Volunteer for all of her hard work. “I've interacted with so many students over the campus, which I never would have been able to do without HSV. I had the opportunity to raise awareness within the community, learn about health issues, and promote healthier lifestyle choices for not only myself but other students at Mississippi State University,” says Washington. “HSV has truly helped me find my purpose at Mississippi State University.”

Mitchell Harris is a junior who has been involved with the Center for America’s Veterans since Spring 2017. Mitchell decided to come to Mississippi State to pursue a degree in Petroleum Engineering, a field about which he is very passionate. Harris speaks highly of his professors and what he has learned during his time in the program, stating, “I truly enjoy the science and the math and the geological aspects of Petroleum Engineering, and how the processes work to get materials from miles beneath us, to inside your gas tank. It is a very interesting and entertaining program run by highly reputable and amazing staff.” Aside from being a dedicated student, Harris is also a member of the National Guard, which is how he became a student employee with the Center for America’s Veterans. Harris’s supervisors and coworkers speak highly of his work ethic and initiative, claiming he’s an integral part of their program. “The Center for America’s Veterans has impacted me greatly while I have been a student at Mississippi State. I have made new friends while working there with student workers and staff alike. I truly believe that everyone that is involved with the CAV genuinely is going to have your best interest in mind. Being able to work and study in an environment like that really makes college much more enjoyable,” says Harris.
It’s been quite a journey down memory lane to see all the programs, services, and activities the Division of Student Affairs facilitated in the 2019-2020 academic year. Our on-campus experiences were disrupted in March 2020, and time has moved so quickly since then. I enjoyed reminiscing in my review of this year’s magazine. So much has happened in these past 6 months. I continue to be amazed by the resilience of our students, our staff, and our community. If someone told me on March 1, 2020 all that would be accomplished, programs completely reimagined, and services we would deliver remotely, I would have never believed it. But we did it! Our students did it and our staff did it. I could not be prouder, or more grateful. So, this year’s magazine tells part of our story, and perhaps next year’s will tell the rest. In the meantime, I hope our students and our community will stay safe and well and so will you, our readers. I hope we will continue to be innovative and creative, striving to ensure our students have what they need to be successful. My sincere thanks to our Marketing & Communications team for their efforts to bring our story to life! And as always, HAIL STATE!

Regina Young Hyatt
REGINA YOUNG HYATT, PH.D.
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

20th Anniversary of Bulldog Bash with an all-time high of 30,000 in attendance.

Student Choice Awards program was developed to recognize and award student organizations, students and advisors for their contributions to MSU student life.

145 students average attendance for Dawgs After Dark hosted by Center for Student Activities.

Fraternities & Sororities at MSU raised over $725,000 in philanthropy dollars and performed over 30,000 service hours during the 2019-2020 academic year. Fraternity & Sorority members have a 14% higher graduation rate than non-affiliated students; further OFSL hosted educational sessions during the 2019-20 academic year which included sessions known as Teaching Everyone Awareness or T.E.A. centered on diversity and inclusion.

New Maroon Camp recorded its largest number of participants in the history of the camp for the fifth consecutive year with over 1200 campers in attendance. Students that participated in NMC persisted from Fall to Spring at 8% higher rate than non-NMC participants.

Made over $500K worth of infrastructure improvements and equipment upgrades, including the new covered back patio that increased our covered usable space by more than 1500 square feet.

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The Center for America’s Veterans received several recognitions for its commitment, dedication and services provided for our military-connected students. These recognitions include:

• 2020/2021 Military Friendly (Top 10 School, #5); 2nd consecutive year we have received this recognition.
• 2019/2020 – Best for Vets Recognition; highest ranking for any SEC institution.
• 2020/2021 – Military Spouse Friendly designation.
• Increased the military-connected student population in Fall of 2019 to nearly 3000 students. The highest number of enrollments on record for military-connected students.
• Awarded the highest number of scholarships totaling more than $86,000 to our military-connected students. The highest number on record.

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**COMPUTER-BASED TESTING SERVICES**

The center administered 3441 professional and certification exams for students and the community at-large for the period of July 1, 2019–March 16, 2020 before the COVID-19 disruption.

Over 150 students and parents became aware of CBT services through our targeted outreach at local schools, orientations, and student activity fairs.
PLANNING & ASSESSMENT

Led the development and successful implementation of an 8-part professional development program focused on strengthening our foundational skill in the NASPA/ACA recommended professional competency, Social Justice and Inclusion.

Played a key role in the planning and execution of the Southeast Chief Student Affairs Officers Annual Meeting hosted by Mississippi State University Student Affairs.

Formally established and initiated the MSU Student Affairs Program Review including the development of a program review guide and policy.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Mississippi State University received the 2020 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in January. The Center for Community-Engaged Learning (CCEL) and Maroon Volunteer Center staff were the lead authors on the in-depth application.

The Day One Program consisted of 214 students and contributed 4,768 service hours to the community during Fall 2019.

The Montgomery Leadership Program had 33 students completing 26 capstone projects during Spring 2020.

STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

We were successfully accredited with AAAHC (Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care) for another three-year period.

In the Fall of 2019, we instituted onsite mental health care.

Since the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester, we have provided over 700 mental health visits to our students. Since February, the staff of LSHC have been preparing, coordinating, and helping to implement COVID-19 relief services. Several of our providers have remained on the front lines working through this pandemic, providing care to many, as the Student Health Center has remained open for the duration.

UNIVERSITY RECREATION

In October, University Recreation collaborated with the MSU e-Sports Club, MSU Athletics, ITS, and Event Services to host the eSports Egg Bowl in the Humphrey Coliseum. This was the Egg Bowl’s second year, and the first time it was hosted at MSU.

Two new workout spaces were created in the Sanderson Center to give patrons more space, privacy, and comfort during their workouts, and to maximize space utilization in the facility and adapt to increasing enrollment.

In the Spring semester, 82 students, with guidance from 5 professors, studied and developed plans and renderings for a new wellbeing complex using Mississippi State’s McCarthy Gym, or the site of the McCarthy Gym, as the starting point.

PARENT SERVICES

The Off-Campus Student Service Office hosted fall and spring housing fairs.

The Office of Parent and Family Services hosted its first “away game” Bulldog Family Weekend during the 2019 fall semester. We welcomed almost 1,000 guests (approximately 300 families of current MSU students) from 23 states. During this event, we successfully partnered with several student groups to create a halftime show.

The Office of Parent and Family Services have partnered with various campus departments to ensure families were well-informed and supported throughout the COVID-19 experience.

UNIVERSITY POLICE

Became certified by the FBI in reporting to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). In doing so, we were the first university in the state to do so and only the 16th police department overall.

Life Safety added 511 cameras and 186 doors to the Genetec video and access control system.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES / ACCESS PROGRAM

For the first time in university history, an ACCESS senior was nominated for and elected as Homecoming King by the student body.

ACCESS hosted a workshop in February 2020 called “Tips for Transition” for Mississippi.
This past year has been anything but normal, which is why I was so proud of how my team stepped up and accomplished so much when having to switch to a virtual environment for both their academics and campus jobs. This piece truly would not be published without their hard work and dedication during this unprecedented time.

We have stuck to the true nature of Maroon Traditions for this year’s issue with it being conceptualized, written, and designed by students on our communication staff. Higher education, like the rest of the world, navigated unknown territories heading into the fall semester, which makes me so thankful to be working on this amazing team through this time. We hope that you enjoyed seeing the amazing things the Division of Student Affairs accomplished during our 2019-2020 academic year, despite the pandemic.

FOREVER MAROON & WHITE!

KATIE CORBAN
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS