From the Desk of the Vice President

Let’s imagine UT Austin without a Division of Student Affairs:

Put yourself in the shoes of a student. You leave class one afternoon and step outside. It’s a beautiful day on the Forty Acres. You stop, look around and try to figure out what to do with the rest of your day.

Well, you can’t go back to your residence hall room. There aren’t any residence halls. You can’t do a quick workout at Gregory Gym because Recreational Sports isn’t a thing. Maybe you’ll grab a late lunch? Except, of course, you can’t. No dining halls.

No dining halls, no places to study in the Texas Union, no student organizations. Nothing outside the classroom that fosters the college life experience.

You think: Isn’t college so much bigger than just attending class? Shouldn’t these be some of the best years of my life? You feel anxious and lonely because there are no programs, organizations or events to connect with other students. But you can’t talk to a counselor because there is no Counseling and Mental Health Center.

Thinking about our work in this way—imagining UT Austin without student affairs—inspires and focuses me. It’s a compelling reminder of just how much our team does to create a world-class college experience. Yes, we’re 37 units across nine departments. And yes, we work directly with 98 percent of undergraduate students. But those numbers don’t tell the whole story.

So, in this year’s Impact Report, you’ll read stories—about outstanding students, award-winning staff and innovative programs. But underlying all of them is a simple idea: We are transforming the university. In ways big and small, every day, each of us is influencing the Longhorn life.

Thank you for your support of student affairs and The University of Texas at Austin, both now and in the future.

Hook ’em,

Soncia Reagins-Lilly
Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

On the Cover

Recreational Sports Lifeguards, Spring 2019
Maren Asbury, Anthony Bellino, Nelson Dominguez, David Fernandez, Jose Flores, Tyler Grant, Marco Hernandez, Zach Jenkins, Sawyer Keller, Cruz Lopez, Ally McConnell, Diego Mendiola, Christina Mihova, Jaime Montelongo, Katherine Newton, Katie Nguyen, Amelia Nicot, Aislinn O’Kelly, Trevor Patchske, Jake Reynolds, Matthew Scheik, Kendallyn Tatsch, Kyle Van De Walle, Tony Vo, Johari Weaver, Lauren Whisler

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Inside

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6 Transforming Programs
10 Transforming Lives

Resident Assistant and Student in Jester East Residence Hall
Transforming Students

We help students transform their lives. In turn, they transform the world.

"Leadership happens every day, in small ways, by all sorts of people."

Dave Dessauer

Burnt Orange Leadership Development

Dave Dessauer wants us to rethink what leadership means.

"Too often, we think leaders are bosses and that leadership means doing huge things," says Dessauer, the director of the Leadership and Ethics Institute in the Office of the Dean of Students. "But leadership happens every day, in small ways, by all sorts of people."

The Burnt Orange Leadership Development (BOLD) program aims to prove that—and to impact the Longhorn life in an innovative way.

Launched this year, BOLD guides a cohort of students—mostly freshmen and sophomores unlikely to think of themselves as the "leadership type"—through a two-year, self-paced leadership program. "We wanted to let students pursue their leadership skills in a way that works for them," Dessauer explains.

BOLD begins with a one-day retreat, at which participants are introduced to a new concept of leadership—one that emphasizes being an engaged, generous and collaborative citizen.

Following the retreat, BOLD students find a faculty mentor, someone with whom they can set goals and develop a plan for achieving them. The depth of that connection could last a lifetime.

Then, in coordination with Dessauer’s team, participants craft a personalized leadership development plan that will guide them for the next two years.

Students will leave BOLD having made leadership a habit, a way of moving through the world.

"At UT Austin, we say that what starts here changes the world," Dessauer says. "Well, with our leadership programs—and with BOLD in particular—we aim to change the people who will change the world."
Reinventing the Internship

As a recent graduate, Nali Shah understood the challenges students go through finding and securing internships. So, when she heard of Dr. Lilly’s vision of launching a new internship program within the Division of Student Affairs, Shah was excited to spearhead the effort. Based on her own experiences, she understood the ingredients for a good internship.

One thing they need: great feedback. Too often, interns aren’t told what’s working, what isn’t, and how they can perform better. To combat this, Shah enlisted a team of educational psychology experts to design a thorough evaluation process. Before, during and after their internships, students and supervisors will complete assessments. The result? Each edition of the internship program will be better than the one before.

Shah ran with something else: Dr. Lilly’s advice that the Division is a creative playground. With 37 units spread across nine departments, the Division offers an almost endless variety of internship opportunities. The pilot program launched in Summer 2019 with 17 roles ranging from developing training courses, to designing environmentally sustainable programs for campus, to building better communication strategies and tactics for the Division. Interns worked 19 hours for 10 weeks, June through August, and received an hourly wage and housing stipend.

And that’s just the first year. Next, Shah is excited that the expanded vision will offer a build-your-own internship, where students invent roles that align with their professional aspirations. It’s one more way the Division of Student Affairs is helping students live the Longhorn life.

Next year, the Division of Student Affairs Internship Program will be housed in the Leadership and Ethics Institute in the Office of the Dean of Students.

“The world needs your talents now. The world needs you now.”

Michael Dell
in Fall 2018 with mixed feelings. She was thrilled to attend her dream school, but she missed her parents back in Hidalgo, Texas. “Once I was here, I got homesick right away,” she explains. “My parents didn’t know how to help because they hadn’t gone through it. They couldn’t tell me about internships or filing for financial aid—stuff like that.” Mondie-Milner says it goes beyond paperwork. “There’s also an emotional component. Most first-generation students feel enormous pressure. They’re the pride of their families.”

That’s why we make special efforts to support the 22 percent of Longhorns who are first-generation students:

- Freshman/Transfer Orientation and Texas Parents’ Family Orientation programs for first-generation students and their families
- A University Housing and Dining Living Learning Community for first-generation students so they can navigate their first year together
- A website—firstgeneration.utexas.edu—that gathers resources into one place

Last November, almost 500 first-generation students, alums and faculty gathered for a celebration in the UT Tower. Cavazos attended. The theme of the day was simple: Being a first-generation student is a challenge—and an honor.

“When I first got to Austin, I felt alone,” she points out. “But I quickly learned that here, at UT Austin, you’re never alone.”
Three Incredible Longhorns

We’re lucky. Every day, we get to design new ways to support our students. But, inevitably, we end up being as inspired by them as they are by our work. Meet three Longhorns who, among an impressive cohort, stand out.

JACQUELINE GIBSON
BS ’19 - Computer Science
BA ’19 - African and African Diaspora Studies

Jacqueline Gibson’s first semester at UT Austin was challenging. As one of only two black students in the computer science program, Gibson felt isolated and a little lost. So, in the spring semester of her freshman year, she took charge. She founded the Association of Black Computer Scientists, a student organization, which has grown to more than 40 members, does a ton—including high-school outreach and supporting incoming freshmen. But at its core, they are about inclusion. “I’m trying to leave the Forty Acres better than I found it,” she explains. As one of the Texas Parents Outstanding Student Award recipients, it’s safe to say: Mission accomplished.

COLTON BECKER
BS ’19 - Nutrition

“In small towns,” explains Colton Becker, “we depend on each other to get by.” So it’s no wonder that when he arrived in Austin from Alvin, Texas—population 25,000, about half UT Austin’s total enrollment—he began looking for ways to help his fellow Longhorns. That eventually led him to being elected Student Government president. During his term, Becker helped launch several initiatives—including feminine hygiene products in University Unions’ facilities and hydration stations across campus. His student résumé is lengthy and impressive, but it’s his humility, collaborative spirit and empathy that have embodied the Longhorn life. He is also one of the Texas Parents Outstanding Student Award recipients.

MARGARET JING-RHONE SIU
BA ’20 - Plan II Honors

Margaret Jing-Rhone Siu cemented her Longhorn legacy within her first couple of months on campus when she founded Apricity Magazine. Apricity is the official arts and literary magazine of UT Austin. But this is no ordinary magazine. It’s a part-digital, part-print, all-innovative, highly-interactive, gorgeously-designed experience. That’s why it won the Gold Crown from Columbia Scholastic Press Association this year—the highest honor in the country for college publications. And she has big plans to build a not-for-profit organization for arts outreach overseas. But as she explains, “It’s all part of our mission to establish UT Austin as a champion for the arts.”
Transforming Programs

Every year, we find new ways to engage students, faculty, staff and parents.

A Peer-Based Approach to Mental Wellness

Andrea Torres isn’t a doctor yet—and she’s unsure what her specialty will ultimately be—but she knows for certain that, whatever her medical practice, her deepest passion will be interacting with patients. It’s why she spent this year serving as a student assistant for the Mental Health Peer Education Program. It offers her a chance to work face to face to make real change.

“We want to show students that what they’re feeling is normal and others have felt the same way. There are solutions to the anxiety they’re feeling. We’re here to show them,” she says.

This year, she and her team responded to dozens of requests across campus to speak about mental health, resilience and stress management. The idea behind the initiative is profoundly simple: students will hear key messages more clearly from their peers than from professors or staff members.

And because the Mental Health Peer Education program is nestled inside the Longhorn Wellness Center, data is a big part of the process. As mental health education efforts extend into the new year, we’ll continue to collect, analyze, and respond to data in order to refine our efforts—to make them more efficient and effective.

In the end, 1,297 students are learning, connecting and practicing new strategies to improve their well-being because of the messages being crafted and spread by the Longhorn Wellness Center.
Extending Orientation Online

Each summer, nearly 10,000 freshmen and transfer students converge on the Forty Acres to spend up to three days in orientation sessions. It’s a massive undertaking for New Student Services, a department in the Division of Student Affairs:

- 10,000 first-time students—most of them still teenagers
- Ten orientation sessions squeezed into two months
- Nearly 100 orientation advisors (current students who make orientation run)

For most Longhorns, this is their first official college experience and one of their earliest memories as an adult.

While 95 percent of incoming students are able to attend orientation in person, we wanted to reach students who couldn’t attend. In Spring 2019, we officially launched Online Orientation so that the other five percent along with several hundred readmitted students were also able to receive some of the valuable resources provided at orientation.

New Student Services notified any student who didn’t attend an in-person session to take the online orientation. The student logs in, participates in a one-hour interactive course and leaves with information to help them transition to the university.

Students see a video welcome message from President Gregory L. Fenves, learn how to register for classes and hear about our commitment to health and safety. And perhaps most importantly, they discover specific ways to connect with each other.

“Nothing compares to attending orientation in person,” explains Kyle St. Nicholas, the assistant director of New Student Services and leader of the Online Orientation project. “But students who can’t come to Austin still need important information. We’re delivering it.”

Kyle St. Nicholas
that if you’re recovering from substance use disorder, here is a place where you belong.

Here is where you can be a student who’s in recovery.

Here, you can thrive.

"Recovery is something you do for the rest of your life,” Sierra Castedo de Martell, former center director, explains. “It’s not an event, over in two days.”

The center’s model—which emphasizes support, community and openness—has been adopted by The University of Texas System’s eight academic campuses. Countless students across Texas will get support to remain in recovery.

When the center was first established in 2004, it was the fifth program of its kind in the country. Today, there are more than 180 programs at colleges and

universities serving students in recovery. So you can understand why, when they celebrated its 15th anniversary at a luncheon in April, the atmosphere was so electric.

Imagine: A couple hundred people—students, parents, friends, allies—who have spent the last few years sharing their most vulnerable selves with each other, gathered as Longhorns.

It was an emotional celebration and a look toward a happy—and healthy—future.
“The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned.”

Maya Angelou
Transforming Lives

Whatever your interest or passion, the Division of Student Affairs is ready to help you pursue it.

Outstanding Staff

We change lives. In diverse and specialized ways, each Division staff member defines how students will remember their time on the Forty Acres. The Texas Parents Staff Merit Award is one way we recognize individuals who are influencing the Longhorn life.

Marilyn Russell
Director, Sorority and Fraternity Life,
Office of the Dean of Students

After 10 years working with the sorority and fraternity community, Marilyn Russell saw an opportunity. For years, multiple offices and programs, including her own, had been encouraging students to become good bystanders—teaching them how to get involved when they see something bad.

But there wasn’t a single, unifying, campus-wide initiative to help the message stick.

In collaboration with colleagues, she co-founded BeVocal—a program that emphasizes “Recognize, Choose, Act” when students witness high-risk behavior.

What started as a small committee has grown into a program so successful that it’s been rolled out at the other seven UT System academic campuses, where it’s already protecting students.

Russell and her team have cemented their legacy by helping create a community where Longhorns take care of each other.
At the end of his freshman year at UT Austin, Justin Samuel became a resident assistant at Jester East Residence Hall. He quickly discovered that he not only enjoyed helping students have a safe, memorable, full college life, he was really good at it. So good that he was selected “RA of the Year” in his first year.

Soon after, Samuel changed his major to human development and family sciences. He earned his master’s degree (at some “big” state university in Ohio). And he returned to Austin, joining the Division of Student Affairs and later becoming an assistant director of residence life.

He launched his monthly open-door meeting, “Jabbering With Justin,” to stay connected to students as he moves up the ranks. Students stop by his office to ask questions, connect with each other and just hang out with a staffer and Longhorn whose passion for his work radiates.

Samuel has an exhaustive list of future projects to pursue—from creating meditative spaces across campus to offering inclusive food options 24/7 on campus. He’s an idea fountain, and every idea is centered on helping every student live the Longhorn life.

Here’s something that happens to Miles Sapp regularly. He’s in his office, managing 1,200+ pages on the Office of the Dean of Students’ website. Someone says, “Hey, Miles! So, we were thinking. We need an online tool that lets students submit such-and-such and then get an email that confirms their such-and-such.”

And then, somehow, he makes it. He designs it. He builds it. He tests it and enhances it. Sapp’s job title is “Webmaster,” but in the decade he’s spent in his role, he’s actually been much more. He’s a brand ambassador, a designer, an architect and a project manager.

Take, for example, Hurricane Harvey. It hit the Gulf Coast the week before the fall semester started. Students from the Houston area literally couldn’t make it to Austin. The university was running on overtime, trying to keep thousands of these students informed. Things were changing every hour.

Through it all, the Office of the Dean of Students’ website served as an important resource covering all the programs and services provided to further students’ success. And there was Sapp, handling it all with ease and patience. Impacting the Longhorn life, online.

“Supporting Student Veterans”

“We have developed a student-led and student-focused program that helps veterans succeed on campus and in the community. I’m grateful for the many philanthropic partners who recognized the unlimited potential of our veterans and invested in our programs.”

Jeremiah Gunderson, director of Student Veteran Services in the Office of the Dean of Students, was named Chapter Advisor of the Year by Student Veterans of America. He received the award at their national convention in January 2019.
Engaging Longhorn Parents

We’ve found that in their efforts to help support their own students, Longhorn parents and families want to help the entire campus community. That’s why we continue to design new ways for them to engage with UT Austin. Our goal is to allow them to advocate for other parents, as well as the issues they’re most passionate about.

For Bill McDonald, chair of the Longhorn Family Leadership Council, the issue he’s most passionate about is mental health. “The stress our kids are under is enormous, and we want to give parents the chance to get involved.” To do that, the council has established a fund to help address critical needs for students, like providing and promoting mental health service across the Forty Acres.

In that same effort to engage parents, the Office of the Dean of Students is taking important messages directly to parents in a new outreach program. They are holding Houston Parent Outreach Program events with families and newly admitted students about identifying high-risk behaviors and helping to prevent them, before they arrive on campus.

“We want to define and contextualize high-risk behaviors such as hazing,” explains Marilyn Russell, director of Sorority and Fraternity Life in the Office of the Dean of Students. “By discussing the changing expectations of student organizations, we hope to empower parents and students to identify those behaviors and take action.”

Together, parents and families are discovering that the Division of Student Affairs is their bridge to influencing the Longhorn life, for their children and the entire student body.

2018-2019 Longhorn Family Leadership Council

Dawn and Jim Coronado
Angela and John Crates
Michelle and Bryan Goolsby
Suzanne and Don Laidlaw
Jane and Bill McDonald
Teresa and Haynes Morris
Kristin and Tony Schell
Joan and Bruce Sostek
Division Awards, Recognitions and Scholarships

1999 Bonfire Unity Endowed Presidential Scholarship
Acacia Fraternity Endowed Scholarship
Alys Jones Bodoin Centennial Endowed Scholarship
Arno Nowotny Medal
Betty A. Thompson Endowment for Recreational Sports
Bill Frisbie Endowed Scholarship
Bill Patman Endowed Scholarship
Brian L. Harlan Memorial Endowment
C. Thomas Behrman/Tejas Scholarship
Carol Weikman Farnsworth & James Walter Farnsworth Endowment for Students in Recovery
C. C. “Jitter” Nolen Spirit Award
Charles and Carolyn Spence, James and Kathryn (Spence) Nance, and William (Spence) and Edith Nance Endowed Scholarship
Cristi Biggs Orientation Leadership Fund
Cullen Trust for Higher Education Endowed Fund for Students in Recovery
Dawn & Greg Crouch Endowed Excellence Fund for Students in Recovery
Dean Byron Fullerton/Tejas Scholarship
DeDe and Joe Bill Watkins Endowed Scholarship
Delta Gamma Foundation Endowed Lecture Fund in Values and Ethics
Delta Tau Delta Endowed Scholarship
Donna Stockton-Hicks & R. Steven Hicks Endowed Excellence Fund for the Center for Students in Recovery
Fleming Fellowship Scholarship
Floyd B. Hoelting Quality of Residence Life Award
Foyt Family Endowment for Student Affairs
George Kinnsolving Endowed Memorial Student Services Scholarship
Gerald E. Haxhurst & Susan St. Denis Endowed Presidential Scholarship
Glenn Maloney Memorial Scholarship
Gregory E. Lucia/Tejas Scholarship
Harrison Brown Endowed Excellence Fund
Haruka Weiser Endowed Excellence Fund for Campus and Student Safety
Ingram Lee Endowed Scholarship
Intramural Endowment
James W. Vick Academic Bridge Fund Endowment
Jean Perkins Foundation
Combat Veteran Scholarship
Jessica Michelle Fertitta Excellence Fund for Student Advocacy & Civic Engagement
Jim Fenne Fund
John M. Childs Scholarship for Intramural Referees
Judge Harley Clark/Tejas Scholarship
Judge Royce C. Lambeth/Tejas Scholarship
Judge Zeke Zbranek/Tejas Scholarship
Kenneth Ford Family Endowed Scholarship
Longhorn Family Leadership Fund
Lubbock Endowed Excellence Fund for Handball in Honor of Pete Tyson
Maralyn S. Heimlich Scholarship
Margaret Alexander Steiner Endowed Scholarship Fund
Margaret C. Berry Student Activities Fund
Marion B. Buescher Memorial Scholarship
Mark L. Hart, Jr. Endowed Scholarship
Max. Gene Alice and Lynn Sherman The Center for Students in Recovery Endowment
Merryman/Revell Excellence Endowment
National Residence Hall Honorary Induction
National Residence Hall Honorary “Of the Month” Awards
Nelson Puett, Jr. Endowment for Recreational Sports
Office of the Dean of Students Dean’s Dozen
Office of the Dean of Students Pillars of the Forty Acres Recognition Program
Office of the Dean of Students Sorority and Fraternity Life Awards
Office of the Dean of Students Swing Out Awards
Office of the Dean of Students Transforming Texas Greeks
Office of the Dean of Students Veteran Academic Leadership Award
Orange Jackets Endowment for Voices Against Violence
Parents’ Association Student Services Endowment Fund
Phi Gamma Delta Endowed Scholarship
Play Golf America
University Endowment in Recreational Sports
Rebecca H. Carreon Scholarship Fund
Recreational Sports Endowed Scholarship
Richard B. Dyke Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Communications
Robert G. Childress Endowed Scholarship
Robert L. Dewar Golf Scholarship
Scott B. Styles Endowed Excellence Endowment Fund for Lacrosse
Sean N. Bourgeois Memorial Endowed Scholarship
Senate of College Councils’ Reid Awards
Texas Men’s Lacrosse Endowment
Texas Parents Mike Wacker Award
Texas Parents Outstanding Student Awards
Texas Parents Staff Merit Awards
Texas Union Student Awards Endowment
Texas Union–University Co-Operative Society Presidential Medallion Endowment
The Center for Students in Recovery Scholarships
The Center for Students in Recovery Alumni Endowment
The Center for Students in Recovery Fund
The David L. Shull Memorial Scholarship
Theodore Henry Strauss Student Award for Exemplary University Service
Thomas W. Dixon Endowed Scholarship
Tom and Bitsy Hall Endowed Presidential Scholarship
University Health Services Healthy Student Organization Program Awards
University Health Services Outstanding Student Health Leadership Award
University Housing and Dining Residence Life Leadership Awards
University Unions J.J. “Jake” Pickle Citizenship Award
University Unions Pal—Make A Difference Award
University Unions Shirley Bird Perry Leadership Award
W. Ralph Canada, Jr. Endowment for Horns Helping Horns
William Andrew Smith, Jr. Grasp Award

Make a Difference

Your investment matters to our students. Every financial investment provides resources to help Longhorns reach their full potential. Make a gift online at bit.ly/GivetoDivision.

Contact Heather Guerrero at heatherguerrero@austin.utexas.edu or (512) 475-6134 for more information on how to support students through philanthropy.
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Division of Student Affairs Departments

Counseling and Mental Health Center
cmhc.utexas.edu
(512) 471-3515

New Student Services
orientation.utexas.edu
(512) 471-3304

Office of the Dean of Students
deanofstudents.utexas.edu
(512) 471-5017

Recreational Sports
utrecsports.org
(512) 471-1155

Texas Parents
texasparents.org
(512) 471-2353

The Center for Students in Recovery
recovery.utexas.edu
(512) 475-6778

University Health Services
healthyhorns.utexas.edu
(512) 471-4955

University Housing and Dining
housing.utexas.edu
(512) 471-3136

University Unions
universityunions.utexas.edu
(512) 475-6636

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