As an anonymous story goes, one night at dusk, Rabbi Akiva was reading the Tanakh, walking a trail towards home and distracted by his intense focus on the text, he mistakenly turned the wrong way, leading him to the front of a Roman fortress. A sentry, noticing the rabbi standing at the gate, boomed out, “Who are you and what are you doing here?” Startled, and after a prolonged pause, the rabbi, barely able to see the sentry against the setting sun, questioned back, “How much do they pay you to ask those questions?” Taken aback by the rabbi’s surprising question, the sentry hesitated before considering his answer, “Three drachma,” he responded in a subdued tone. The rabbi shouted, “I’ll pay you twice as much if you’ll stand by my front door and ask me the same two questions every day.”

Why such an offer by the rabbi? It’s clear he believed a daily reminder would be beneficial and was willing to pay to be challenged with the questions; but why? Because they are two of the most life-changing and impactful questions anyone could ask themselves. And, we need to be reminded of where or from whom we get our identity, and just what our purpose is in this life. But just as important as the answers are the equally important follow-up questions: are you fulfilling your purpose and how?

So, who are you? What are you doing here? If someone asked you these questions as you left your house tomorrow, what would you say? Perhaps, “You’re trespassing! Get off my lawn,” or “Leave me alone,” might be your immediate responses. But the real issue is: would you have answers to the questions? On their surface, they’re direct and straightforward; but they’re quite profound if you allow them to penetrate your soul.

So, how did you answer? If asked the questions in a work setting, would you answer by reciting your name and job description, or with your title and a comment like, “Making a living”? Reasonable responses, but do they fully articulate your purpose for being here – on earth, or at work for that matter? Perhaps you, like many, have compartmentalized your life, and ‘work’ is one of your many compartments. And, maybe that’s exactly why you’re at UTSA - it’s a job and one in which you can make a living. And likely, you’re glad to have it. “It’s that simple,” you say? Really? I believe that’s way too superficial, and without any in-depth reflection of the impact and the overall purpose of your life in general, and specifically at work.

But, for the time being, let’s focus on one compartment: occupation. I can’t imagine working a job without a larger purpose than making a living, or for that matter, just doing the job to the best of my ability. There must be more to it. While I expect you to do the best job you’re capable of with the responsibilities and resources given you, I trust your purpose is much broader and is at least centered around Business Affairs’ primary purpose for existing, that is, “to make success happen” for others. Our purpose must not only focus on others, but we must think more highly of them than we do ourselves. That’s the only way we’re going to fulfill our purpose at work; for that matter, that’s the only way we are going to fulfill our purpose – period.

So, who are you and what are you doing here? Ponder your responses carefully, as they will echo through the generations.

Kerry
On August 20, 2013, UTSA lost a great police officer, Sgt. Hector Barrera. He was a friend to the UTSA community and always had a big smile for everyone he met. He was a team player who would light up a room with his positive attitude and his laugh. Officer Barrera was in a fatal traffic accident on his way to work. Barrera joined the UTSA Police Department in May 2000 as a parking controller and became a communications operator with the department in September 2001. He enrolled in the UT System Police Academy in January 2003 and was commissioned as a police officer in June 2003. He served the UTSA Police Department until August 2004, and then joined the Zapata County Sheriff's Office from 2004 to 2005 and the Starr County Sheriff's Office from 2005 to 2006. Barrera returned to the UTSA Police Department in November 2006. In October 2008, he was promoted to corporal, and in September 2012 was promoted to sergeant. He is survived by his wife, Liza, and three sons.

Ron is an HR Advisor, and has been a valued member of the UTSA HR team since 2007. He leads UTSA's staff employment function, currently posting about 700 benefits-eligible staff jobs and 30,000 applicants annually utilizing our online applicant job system, STARS. Prior to UTSA, Ron gained extensive HR experience during his 15 years in the employment temporary staffing industry.

Ron received an MBA from Wayland Baptist University. Ron and his wife Stacy are proud parents of a four year old son, and have recently become foster parents of a three month old. Needless to say, Ron does not have an abundance of free time. Ron is active in his church, enjoys watching football and basketball (lifelong Spurs, Dolphins, and now Roadrunner fan), and in the spare time he does have, he is an avid landscaper and home improvement wannabe recently completing a paver patio/deck project.

Ron loves to spend time in the backyard with family, friends, his semi-loyal dog Rusty, and to take every opportunity possible to throw some steaks on the backyard grill, smoke a brisket, or just hang out by the fire pit toasting marshmallows with the kids.

Thank you, Ron, for you invaluable service to Business Affairs, and the University community.

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In Memory of Hector Barrera

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Kudos to Business Affairs Staff

Hello Jessenia (Skelton),

My name is Marty, and I work with Extended Education Department at the downtown campus. We recently had two events this summer; one at the MAIN campus and the other at the DTC. For these events, we had classrooms reserved for an entire week in which required assistance from Access Control so that I could get privileges on my employee card to be able to open/lock doors as needed since valuables were being left overnight (and some over the weekend). As this was my first time coordinating an event at UTSA, I didn’t know what to expect and didn’t know there were some loopholes that needed attention throughout the week. Thanks to a great team you have, my events ran smooth with no problems. The two gentlemen I worked with were Tomas Fuentes and Willie Lowak. They were great to work with, very helpful and were able to assist me with no pushback. If I ever encountered a glitch, they assisted me instantly and even made a trip to the downtown campus to fix a door we were having issues with. I had asked them who they reported to, and they gave me your name so I just wanted to let you know how helpful they were and how I greatly appreciated it.

Have a great day!

Mrs. Marty Gutierrez Saul, MBA
Coordinator, Extended Education Department
University of Texas at San Antonio
Fire Prevention Week

It's time for Fire Prevention Week! October 6-12, Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management (EHSRM) is joining forces with the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to remind local residents to ‘Prevent Kitchen Fires. During this year’s fire safety campaign, firefighters and safety advocates will be spreading the word about the dangers of kitchen fires—most of which result from unattended cooking—and teaching local residents how to prevent the start of kitchen fires.

According to the latest NFPA research, cooking is the leading cause of home fires. Two of every five home fires begin in the kitchen—more than any other place in the home. Cooking fires are also the leading cause of home fire-related injuries.

Among the safety tips that you can use to prevent kitchen fires are:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling, or boiling food.
- If you must leave the room, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- When you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home, and use a timer to remind you.
- If you have young children, use the stove’s back burners whenever possible. Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove.
- When you cook, wear clothing with tight-fitting sleeves.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper and plastic bags, towels, and anything else that can burn, away from your stovetop.
- Clean up food and grease from burners and stovetops.

Fire Prevention Week is actively supported by fire departments across the country, is the longest running public health and safety observance on record.

www.fpw.org (National Fire Prevention week website)

At UTSA, the EHSRM Fire Prevention Team continues to expand opportunities for people at UTSA to escape the fire. We do this through space and event inspections, equipment maintenance, oversight, preparedness exercises, and investigations of occupant reports. This fall, ESHRM will continue inspections in all residence halls, including the newly-constructed San Saba Hall. We will also accompany inspectors from the Texas State Fire Marshal’s Office around campus as they review our conditions.

Top 10 Fire Safety Tips to Live By. Contact us at 458-5250 with any fire safety questions or concerns.

Wellness Center

After being housed temporarily in different locations on the Main campus, the Employee Occupational Health and Wellness Center has a new semi-permanent home in the Bauerle Road Garage first floor, suite BRG 1.102. Note: this is the former C-Store location.

The Employee Occupational Health and Wellness Center is expected to open Wednesday, October 2 ready to serve the faculty and staff on Main Campus enrolled in the Occupational Health and Wellness Programs at UTSA. Normal business hours will be 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday – Friday. Rebecca Stenberg RN, Occupational Health Coordinator, Sarah Wright, Office Assistant II, and Anna Racelis, Wellness Assistant, will be in the Center on assessment days scheduled at this new location.

The new location will house an exam room, immunization station, workspace for Occupational Health and Wellness, receptionist station, waiting area, and a computerized Health Station and Blood Pressure Kiosk available to all employees who wish to come by and check their vital signs. We are very excited to have the enlarged space for use by our contract doctor and nurse to perform occupational health exams, fitness tests, and administer vaccines in a comfortable environment. In addition, our Occupational Health and Wellness Manager, Kristee Phelps and her Wellness Assistant, Anna Racelis will make use of the new work space and the exam room to provide Health and Wellness assessments. Wellness assessments will still be provided on Main Campus at our west campus location in the EHSRM building SFA 1.102 for those who prefer the convenience of this location. Wellness assessments scheduled for employees at the Downtown Campus, HemisFair Park Campus, and University Heights, will continue at these locations.

Even though we will not be sitting with other team members from the Office of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management at west campus, we are still a part of the great team led by Brian Moroney, Director. We look forward to our new location and improved ability to support and care for the faculty and staff’s occupational health and wellness needs.

Please come by on October 2nd to meet us, have some healthy choice refreshments, and see our new home!
Twenty-six faculty and staff at UTSA have collaborated to write a unique anthology of inspirational stories with seven of the authors from Business Affairs. First Light Christian Fellowship’s “Spiritual Journeys of Christian Faculty and Staff”, published by Amazon.com subsidiary, CreateSpace, is now available for purchase at UTSA (Vice President for Business Affairs Office), on Amazon.com, and for download on Kindle.

“Spiritual Journeys of Christian Faculty and Staff” is the organization’s first publication. It includes Christian testimonials by UTSA faculty and staff. Among them:

- One scholar shares personal details about his wife, whose life was cut short by ovarian cancer, and eldest son, whose murder saved the lives of a handful of nearby people.
- A staff member in the UTSA Alumni Office recounts the loss of a loved one and shares how she keeps a daily prayer list so she can pray for family members, friends, colleagues and UTSA alumni.
- A UTSA staff member shares how he and his wife were blessed with two healthy daughters after physicians told them they would never have a family of their own.
- A scientist shares how she came to truly know God after a 20-year hiatus, following a vivid glimpse of heaven.

In 2008, UTSA faculty and staff formalized First Light Christian Fellowship. In 2009, the organization hosted an inaugural dinner meeting, welcoming nearly 100 faculty, staff and students. Since that time, the registered faculty and staff organization has grown and continues to meet weekly. Members learn from each other and encourage each other through biblical teachings, scriptures, prayer, and personal testimonies of faith.

In the epilogue of “Spiritual Journeys of Christian Faculty and Staff”, Kerry Kennedy writes, “Trials and tribulations, and often tragedies, are not uncommon to all mankind. They are expected; in fact, God says we are ‘destined for them,’ though they can creep up on us like a flash flood. Believers have a God who loves them and promises that He’ll eventually bring good in the midst of our troubles.”

First Light Christian Fellowship meets from 7:00-7:45 a.m. each Wednesday in the Bioscience Building Loeffler Room (BSB 3.03.02) on the UTSA Main Campus.

The book’s authors are available to speak at UTSA events and in the community. To learn more, visit http://www1.utsa.edu/staff/firstlight/ or contact Wanda Guntz at wanda.guntz@utsa.edu or 210-458-4201.
Construction Updates

Flawn Building Lecture Hall

Flawn Building Lecture Hall 2.03.08 underwent a major renewal this summer. Improvements include new state-of-the-art lighting divided into twelve sections, which can be individually controlled from the podium, new seating with electrical outlets for students to charge laptops and other mobile devices, new carpet, and floor lighting. In addition, wireless access capacity was increased, an old sound booth was removed, and the wood walls were refurbished. ADA modifications were made to include wheelchair access and work surfaces at the top of the hall. An Assisted Listening Device (ALD) system was installed for hearing impaired students. The completed room is bright and cheerful and will serve as a model for future lecture hall renovations.

East End Recreation Fields

This summer the old track and field adjacent to the softball field was transformed into the East End Recreation Fields, four high-end synthetic grass fields. One field will serve as a practice field for the football team until practice fields are able to be installed at Park West. The remaining three fields will support soccer, lacrosse, and rugby intramural teams. This amazing project began May 2013 and was ready for football practice in August. To prepare the new field area, existing soil was removed and new select base material was hauled in at a rate of 300 trucks a day for over three weeks. Astroturf 3D was chosen for the fields. 3D is a newer Astroturf product with state-of-the-art tufting that more accurately mimics the look and feel of real grass. It also has an increased fiber layer to help increase traction and reduce compaction. A new 3000 square foot building adjacent to the fields includes equipment storage for football, instrument storage for band, and restrooms. The completion of this new practice facility is an exciting addition to the Main Campus. Another plus is that replacement of the natural grass with synthetic turf is estimated to save 4,000,000 gallons/year in irrigation water. A water conservation rebate through SAWS is also being pursued and is expected to return approximately $39,000. Annual water savings will save the university approximately $20,000.

Quotes Worth Remembering

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”

Colin Powell

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”

– Gandhi
The Fall semester is upon us, and the UTSA Office of Emergency Management (x6851, BePrepared@utsa.edu) would like to get back to basics with you when it comes to emergency preparedness. With all the stressors in our daily lives, we often forget how important it is to prepare for emergencies. If you follow the simple measures outlined in this article, you’ll be prepared to act when disaster strikes.

First things first – prepare an emergency kit! In order to respond to any type of emergency, you are advised to put together an emergency kit for your home, car, and office/workplace. Items to include in your kit include water/sports drink, snacks, medications, first-aid kit, important documents, clothes, flashlight, batteries, cell phone charger, and personal hygiene products.

Next on the path to preparedness is to develop an emergency plan. Preparing a plan ahead of time will assist you during an emergency and lessen the stress of figuring out what to do and who to contact. Your plan should include emergency contact information, phone numbers of emergency services, important personal information for emergency responders (medical allergies, doctors, etc), and other basic preparedness information.

Lastly, stay informed! Know the hazards that surround you at all times, and learn about how you can respond to different types of emergencies. Listen to the news, monitor weather conditions, research local threats, and most importantly, share this information with your family, friends, and coworkers. Please verify your contact information in ASAP for the UTSA Emergency Notification System (text or voice, email).

Together, we can build and sustain a disaster resilient university. For more information on emergency preparedness, visit the UTSA Campus Alerts website at www.alerts.utsa.edu.

Be Prepared – Make a Plan – Stay Informed!

PeopleSoft will be more than a convenient tool for recording transactions, preparing financial statements and driving our Human Resources functions. It will enable UTSA to better understand our organization, our processes and our data; ensuring business decision support and actionable reporting now and into the future. So, how are we doing and what’s new? Click here

Business Affairs Promise
We are committed to helping you achieve your goals through excellence in service -- every person, every day, every job.