WELCOME BACK!!

We hope you enjoyed time off during the holiday break and are ready to begin a new semester! DSS is excited to announce some faculty training opportunities, a new addition to our staff, and a committee established with accessibility in mind! As always, we are here to answer any questions you have about working with students.

This edition of the Faculty Newsletter includes:

- reminders about using the faculty portal
- DSS staff additions
- DSS events during Community Week
- introduction of the Existing & Emerging Technologies Committee
- Universal Design workshops offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning
- faculty, staff, and student awards

If you have any suggestions of information you would like added to the Faculty Newsletter, please contact Brittany Gregg (bmgregg@uab.edu).

USING THE DSS FACULTY PORTAL:

Each semester, students who are registered with DSS will send accommodation notices and test proctoring requests electronically. Faculty will receive these materials via email and are encouraged to respond to each student’s accommodation notice and request for test proctoring.

**Simply sending an accommodation notice is not enough—students are expected to also communicate with each instructor regarding how their accommodations will apply to the course. Instructors have the option of including a syllabus statement that requires students to meet with them to discuss accommodations.**

Instructions for responding to accommodation notices and test proctoring requests can be found on the DSS website: [https://www.uab.edu/students/services/disability-support-services/faculty-portal](https://www.uab.edu/students/services/disability-support-services/faculty-portal)

If you have any questions regarding the portal, or providing accommodations to students, please contact DSS at 934-4205 or dss@uab.edu.
ADDITIONS TO THE STAFF OF DSS:

DSS welcomes Rachel King as our new Office Manager. Rachel recently joined our staff in December 2013. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology with a concentration in Social Psychology from UAB, and plans to continue her education and obtain a Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Rachel can assist faculty with general questions about accommodations and DSS policies, coordinating for students to receive testing accommodations at DSS, and referrals to other DSS staff as needed. Rachel can be reached via phone (934-4205) or email (rking060@uab.edu).

DSS also has a brand new position of Counseling & Services Coordinator, which has been filled by Brittany Gregg. This position is responsible for serving as an initial contact for students registering with DSS, coordinating accommodations and university services, and providing counseling and Academic Coaching to students registered with DSS. Brittany joined the DSS staff in September 2012 and transitioned into this new position in December 2013. Brittany earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Samford University (2007), her Master’s degree in Counseling from UAB (2012), and is an Associate Licensed Counselor (ALC). Faculty and students can contact Brittany via phone (934-4205) or email (bmgregg@uab.edu).

DSS EVENTS DURING COMMUNITY WEEK:

DSS has partnered with UAB Campus Recreation and Lakeshore Foundation to sponsor a wheelchair flag football game as part of UAB Community Week!

WHEELCHAIR FLAG FOOTBALL GAME
Monday January 27th ~ 6 PM ~
Campus Recreation Center, Court 4

Watch UAB students, faculty, and staff take on Lakeshore Foundation’s Wheelchair Flag Football Team

Game starts at 6pm, with activities and contests taking place before, during, and after the game

To request disability-related accommodations for attending this event, please contact DSS (dss@uab.edu or 934-4205).
Disability Support Services, with support from the President’s office, has established a committee charged with ensuring accessibility for existing and emerging technologies utilized by the institution. The committee will coordinate efforts to ensure compliance with the university’s obligation to provide equal access to all technology-based services, activities, and information. Support for such a committee originates from recommendations that institutions establish a committee of professionals who are positioned to create an awareness of the university’s responsibility to make choices and develop policies which will create an accessible environment for all students.

The DSS Existing & Emerging Technologies Committee (EETC) is chaired by Dr. Suzanne Austin, Vice Provost for Student and Faculty Success, and Cary Walheim from the Office of Counsel. Committee members and their represented areas include: Allison Solomon (Director, DSS), Carter Naftel (Assistive Technology Specialist, DSS), Melissa Capps Loats (Procurement Contract Manager, Procurement / Purchasing), Dr. Tracee Synco (Executive Director for Retention Initiatives, Provost Office), Lee Smith (Executive Director for Institutional Effectiveness, Provost Office), Dr. Lisa Reburn (Project Director, E-Learning), David Yother (Director for Academic Technology), Andy Marsch (Assistant Vice President for Student Life and ADA Compliance Officer), Dr. Chad Epps (Associate Professor, Physician Assistant Studies and Faculty Senate Representative), Dana Hettich (General Reference Librarian, Sterne Library), Pat Higginbotham (Associate Professor, Lister Hill Library), Pam Burks (Executive Director, Human Resources), and Dr. Laura Kezar (Physiatrist, School of Medicine Student Services).

The committee plans to address accessibility in areas such as contracts, the purchase of software, creating databases, the development and maintenance of webpages and online classes, planning and implementing university events and associated media, and faculty development opportunities. The committee held its first meeting on November 1st, 2013, and will meet again in February to focus on applying accessibility awareness to university contracts.

FACULTY TRAINING ON UNIVERSAL DESIGN OFFERED THROUGH THE CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING:

The Center for Teaching and Learning has collaborated with DSS to offer a series of faculty trainings focused on Universal Design. These training sessions will teach faculty how to design and create an accessible learning environment using the new LMS, Canvas and other tools. The following 3 sessions will be offered during the Spring:

- **Universal Design Principles** – this session highlights the importance of Universal Design, with case law examples, and technology demonstrations
- **Tools and Tips for Implementing Universal Design Principles** – this session demonstrates how to create accessible content using Microsoft Office and Canvas
- **Hands-On session Universal Design** – Teaching with Technology Program – this session focuses on learning how to create accessible content using various software

Dates are to be announced. Register at: [http://www.eventbrite.com/o/center-for-teaching-amp-learning-2739362240?s=10487550](http://www.eventbrite.com/o/center-for-teaching-amp-learning-2739362240?s=10487550)
DSS OUTSTANDING FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS:

Each semester, we ask students who are registered with DSS to nominate a faculty member for the Outstanding Faculty Award. This individual should promote an inclusive classroom, value diverse learning styles and abilities, and believe in supporting and challenging all students.

The Fall 2013 Outstanding Faculty Award is presented to Dr. Anne Cusic. Dr. Cusic is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biology, and was described by the nominator as kind and supportive, well-versed in DSS policies and procedures, and treated students with courtesy and respect. Her nominator credits her for going out of her way to assist with providing accommodations. Congratulations to Dr. Cusic for receiving the Fall 2013 Outstanding Faculty Award!

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Each semester, DSS recognizes a faculty or staff member who has exceeded all requirements and expectations in helping students remove any barriers which would prevent them from being successful at UAB. This is the first time that this award has been bestowed to an office on campus.

The Fall 2013 Outstanding Staff Award is presented to UAB Campus Recreation for continuously striving to create an accessible recreational facility and programs for patrons of all abilities. Their proactive and innovative approach to creating an inclusive environment and programming that reaches everyone has continued to impress the DSS staff which is why they have been chosen for the Outstanding Staff Award. Campus Recreation staff consult with DSS staff on a regular basis, value feedback from their patrons regarding the accessibility and usability of the facility for individuals with disabilities, and strive to make the already outstanding facility even better. It is efforts such as these that make the UAB Campus Recreation staff deserving of the DSS Outstanding Staff award. Congratulations to UAB Campus Recreation!

DSS STUDENT NAMED GOVERNOR’S COMMITTEE STUDENT OF THE YEAR:

Disability Support Services is thrilled to congratulate Hilarion Arong on being selected as Student of the Year by the Birmingham Area Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. This award is presented annually to a student with a disability who has demonstrated exemplary efforts in pursuit of their education and in overcoming limitations related to their disability in doing so.

Hilarion is an undergraduate at UAB double majoring in Computer / Information Science and Mechanical Engineering. As one can imagine, these programs are considered to be very rigorous and demanding, yet Hilarion continues to maintain a strong overall GPA. His nominators describe him as very helpful to others, often helping classmates figure out a problem they are working on. Hilarion is also described as having exceptional attendance, being dedicated to his studies, and consistently demonstrating exemplary efforts in pursuit of his education. Congratulations, Hilarion!

Hilarion Arong, accepting his award at the awards luncheon held on October 25, 2013.