

2022  
2023

# Division of Student Affairs Annual Report







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## A Message from the Vice President for Student Affairs

Blazers,

It is with immense pride that I share with you our Division of Student Affairs 2022-2023 Annual Report which displays the transformation that takes place within our student Blazers and the impact of our staff on the student experience! I want to extend my deep appreciation to our campus partners for your collaboration in making the out of classroom experience so meaningful.

This year, we started new Blazer traditions such as the Crawfish Boil and assisted our Blazers in removing barriers with our Blazer Market Route, making local groceries more accessible to our students. We were recognized as a First Scholars Campus through efforts that assist first-generation students successfully navigate their collegiate experience. We applauded our students for their accomplishments such as the Student Media's Aura receiving a Pinnacle Award from the College Media Association. The year was filled with joy, celebrations, and new beginnings.

We also were lauded with Division-wide recognition, Diverse Issues in Higher Education and ACPA recognized UAB Division of Student Affairs among The Most Promising Places to Work in 2023. I am honored to serve our students alongside talented Student Affairs professionals. The Division was one of just 27 institutions to receive this accolade throughout North America.

I look forward to the amazing year ahead in collaboration with all of you, filled with opportunities to partner with our students on their UAB journey. We are stronger for our students when we work together, and I am excited to enter the 2023-2024 academic year with steadfast commitment to our students and their success as UAB Blazers!

Go Blazers,

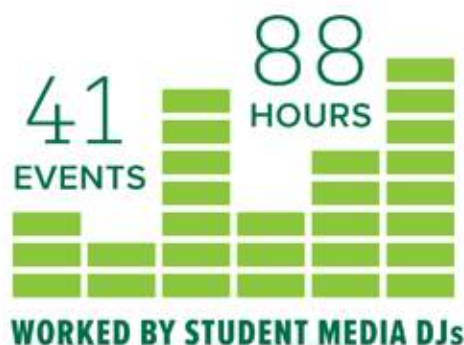
John R. Jones III, Ph.D.  
*Vice President for Student Affairs*

# Student Affairs By the Numbers



**47,457**

UAB Family Hub  
Newsletter users



**1,794** students served by Disability Support Services during academic year 2022-23

**95%** of student respondents would recommend DSS services to fellow UAB students with disabilities

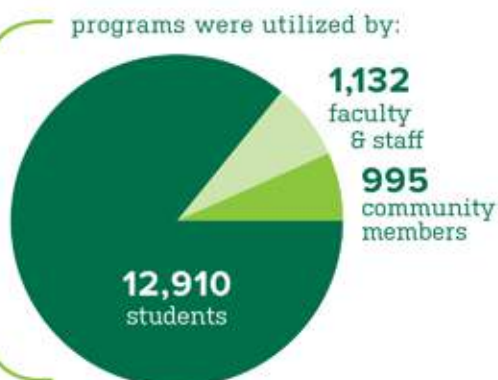


Student Assistance & Support received a **\$25,000** grant from Auburn University to enhance food security on campus

Student Health Services had a total of **25,200 visits** and administered a total of **5,568 vaccines**



**349**  
# of campus and community prevention, education and outreach programs offered by Student Counseling Center





**2,419**

incoming undergraduate students participated in Title IX's Sexual Assault Prevention for Undergraduates course



The Best of UAB 2022 issue produced more than

**\$7K**

in revenue for Student Media outlets

**2,098**

climbing wall participants, with over

**100**

students completing the Golden Route!

### Student Counseling Services

**9,402**

TOTAL SCS APPOINTMENTS

**2,199**

STUDENTS SERVED

The Off-Campus Student Engagement office saw a 19% increase in total unique student visits:

AY2021-22 **1,140**

AY2022-23 **1,357**

**12%**

Little Blazer Wishes had a 12% increase in the number of families sponsored in Fall 2022

**\$4,000**

One-time donation from the McMillian Family to the Little Blazer Wishes Fund

**5%** increase in support of the Little Blazer Wishes Fund

Little Blazer Wishes raised \$3,927 to provide holiday gifts to 230 children from 116 student families.

**\$78,162**

Total philanthropic contributions made by UAB fraternities and sororities in AY2022-23

During academic year 2022-23, approximately

**18,626** students and alums **2,571** employers  
CONNECTED WITH

**88.37%**

(up 74.29% from last year)

of URec's student employees feel they have gained a better sense of belonging at UAB because of employment @ URec

Hill Student Center employed over

**100**

STUDENTS

**9.4 months**  
average employment length

**31K+**

applications submitted via Handshake (3% increase)

Student Housing & Residence Life hired

**20**

PEER WELLNESS AMBASSADORS:

**8**

FIRST-YEARS

**12**

UPPER-CLASSMEN

The UAB Career Center hosted

**16 & 268**

CAREER FAIRS

CAREER EVENTS

**5,188**  
ATTENDEES

# Mission, Vision, and Core Values



## MISSION

*Creating Transformational Experiences for Students*

## VISION

We create learning environments and experiences; build a culture of social justice, innovation, and wellbeing; foster a sense of belonging; remove barriers to enhance student success; and develop leaders who create change.

## Core Values

### WELLBEING

We champion a holistic culture of resiliency, mental and physical health that improves the long-term health of our communities.

### EQUITY & INCLUSION

We uphold the principles of fairness, equity, and social justice by creating an environment where students feel welcome across and at the intersections of their social identities.

### EXCELLENCE

We pursue the highest standard of quality in how we engage with others, manage resources, support our staff, develop ourselves and contribute to student success.

### INTEGRITY

We commit to honesty, transparency and consistency by modeling and teaching ethical behavior

### COLLABORATION

We create intentional partnerships for the shared purpose of supporting student success and achieving university goals.

### INNOVATION

We strive for and advance impactful services and programs which generate contributions of distinction.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

We take responsibility for achieving personal and professional development; set high expectations and enact changes based on data.



# Strategic Priorities

## WELLBEING

We create supportive, sustainable campus environments in which students thrive and flourish. We promote holistic mental and physical health, addressing issues of resilience, access to nutritious food, health care, physical activity, personal development, social connection and active citizenship.

## INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

While recognizing and embracing UAB's distinctive history and location, we create and sustain an inclusive community that recognizes and celebrates our diversity. We create brave, safe spaces for success, meaningful connections and welcoming environments intentionally designed to meet the needs of all its members.

## ENGAGEMENT & LEARNING

We are committed to student success and create learning opportunities and pathways for student involvement beyond the classroom. Students apply and practice classroom learning through active participation in co-curricular experiences that help them attain their personal, professional, and academic goals.

## ORGANIZATIONAL ENHANCEMENT

We are committed to providing a robust, responsive organization that is representative of and meets the needs of our students. We optimize the human, financial, and operational resources in key functional and student support areas to fully develop the Division's capacity for positively shaping the student experience and professional experience of our staff.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We promote active commitment to our communities by contributing knowledge, relationships, partnerships and expertise for the enrichment of society.

# Creating Transformational Learning Environments & Experiences



## Wellness Promotion partners with CAS for Take Back the Night

Wellness Promotion strengthened partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) this year for Take Back the Night and Creativity for a Cause. We saw a 47% increase in participation at TBTN with 193 participants checking in at the event (excluding some march participants and community partners) and received 30 Creativity for a Cause submissions, up from 24 last year.

On March 28, UAB Wellness Promotion and the College of Arts & Sciences hosted “Take Back the Night,” an annual event that uplifts the survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse while advocating for the end of interpersonal violence. Survivors and supporters graced the stage to share their art depicting their resilience and strength.

The evening began with a march whose chants echoed throughout campus, urging others to join the march in solidarity. “We have the power! We have the might! The streets are ours! Take back the night!” sang through the residence halls from McMahon to Blazer Hall filling campus streets until they reached University Hall.

Participants were greeted with information and tabling on personal safety, Planned Parenthood, sexual health, and more. Many students were moved by the intimate works of art that were displayed by Creativity for

a Cause submitters. Others were amazed by the knowledge and content they absorbed at the event. Demetrius Battle, a graduate student on the UAB football team said, “learning those things, we can go back and tell our teammates if we see anything that’s wrong and let them know this is wrong and you shouldn’t be doing that, and this is what you should be doing.”

UAB Wellness Promotion and College of the Arts and Sciences partnered with the Megan Montgomery Foundation, a memorial foundation that honors late UAB alum Megan Montgomery. Friends and family share her story and hope to end relationship violence before it begins.

UAB senior and Promoter of Wellness team member, Kablis Tishano, spoke on the importance of Take Back the Night, saying, “I’m so thankful that we were able to sort of, like, surround them and empower them too in what they’ve experienced.” While the Creativity for Cause pieces did evoke a variety of emotions, it created personal connections that helped close the gap between survivors and people who may be new to learning about the cause.

The seminar also included information about relationships and the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Using examples from pop culture and mixed media, the event runners showed students how to identify these signs and how recognizing them could be the difference between life and death.



## Enhancing Student Wellbeing: UAB's Holistic Approach to Learning Through Wellness

In the academic year 2022–23, UAB's commitment to students extended beyond traditional boundaries, encompassing various dimensions of wellness. By incorporating 'learning through wellness' programming and activities, UAB Student Affairs is fostering a campus culture that prioritizes the physical, mental, and social health of its students. Here are some key highlights of this comprehensive approach:

### » Adventure Recreation

This year Adventure Recreation offered 11 trips, to over 70 participants, introducing them to exciting opportunities to get out into nature and grow personally. The UAB Family Engagement Family Fund stepped up and sponsored seven students to participate, who might otherwise not have been able to attend.

### » UAB got SexuWell

In collaboration with Birmingham Aids Outreach and Aids Alabama, UAB's Wellness Promotion team provided free monthly walk-in STI and HIV testing, conducting a total of 101 tests. In addition, they distributed over 1,000 external condoms and offered vital sexual health resources.

### » Intramurals and Club Sports

These programs offered through University Recreation provide a fun way to stay healthy and build community. Nearly 2,500 students participated this year in our intramurals and another 525 in our club sports.

### » URec On-The-Go

University Recreation went the extra mile by offering over 55 different free virtual and in-person wellness programs to the UAB

community, extending beyond the Campus Recreation Center. The revival of programs like massage therapy, adventure trips, and health fairs after a hiatus since 2019 added to the overall wellness experience.

### » Mental Health First-Aid Training

One of the five Mental Health First-Aid trainings offered by Student Counseling Services partnered with Student Housing to Equip housing professionals with the knowledge and skills to identify and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. This initiative aimed to provide vital support to those in need.

### » Peer Wellness Ambassador Program

Student Housing and Residence Life expanded and enhanced the Peer Wellness Ambassador (PWA) program, focusing on the seven dimensions of wellness. The Wellness Curriculum ensured that PWA programs were educational, empowering residents to care for their own wellbeing while on campus. This initiative also fostered collaboration between Resident Assistants (RAs) and PWAs, resulting in over 12 collaborative events throughout the year.

UAB is committed to the holistic development of its students, emphasizing not only academic success but also the physical, mental, and social health of its students. Through these and other initiatives, UAB continues to create a thriving, supportive, and well-rounded learning environment.

## UAB honors those who served America

At the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), we are committed to fostering transformational learning environments and opportunities for our student veterans. Student veterans bring unique experiences and perspectives to our campus, and we strive to provide them with the resources and support they need to excel academically and personally.

## Resourceful Support for Student Veterans

Our Veteran Services department serves as a cornerstone for our veteran students, offering a wide range of resources and services tailored to their specific needs. Throughout the year, we host multiple informational events aimed at educating student veterans about their benefits, addressing their questions, and providing them with valuable career and volunteer resources. These events are designed to empower our veteran students and equip them with the knowledge they need to thrive at UAB and beyond. Some of our flagship events include:

### » VA Information Sessions

These sessions offer face-to-face interactions with our knowledgeable staff, providing student veterans with the opportunity to ask questions and receive personalized guidance on their benefits.

### » Green Zone Training

Our annual Green Zone training is an essential part of our commitment to creating a supportive environment for student veterans. This training educates UAB employees on how to create safe and understanding spaces for veteran students, ensuring that they feel valued and respected throughout their academic journey.

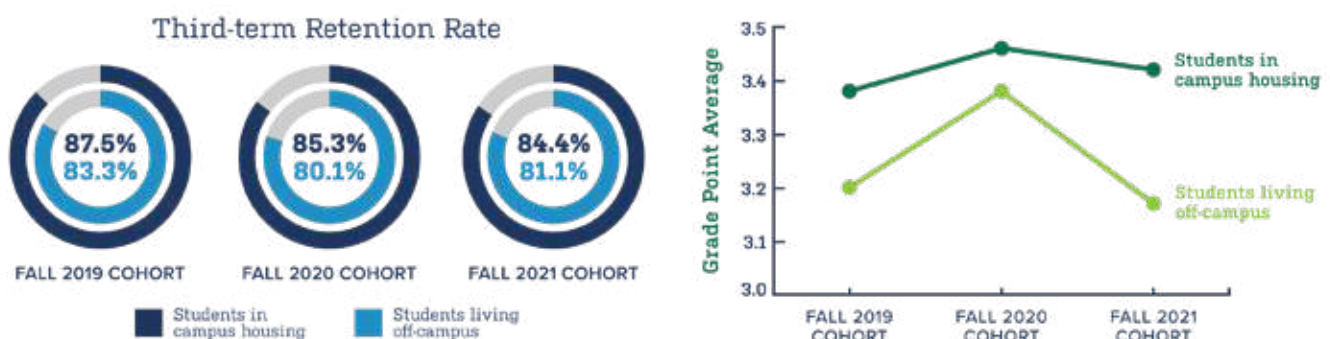
### » Wreath Laying Ceremony

UAB's annual Wreath Laying Ceremony, which celebrated its ninth installment this year, serves as a poignant reminder of the significance of Veterans Day and serves as a testament to our unwavering commitment to our veteran students.

### » Graduation Cord and Challenge Coin Ceremony

During the ceremony UAB honors the academic achievements of student veterans and active service members. Graduating seniors receive a graduation cord and a challenge coin from Veteran Services.

## Positive benefits revealed for residence hall students



# Building a Culture of Social Justice, Innovation, and Wellbeing



## Student Affairs and Live Healthsmart Alabama debut Cooking Health Smart

The Division of Student Affairs, in collaboration with Live Healthsmart Alabama, launched the inaugural season of Cooking Health Smart during the 2022-23 academic year. Cooking Health Smart is an initiative to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills to prepare delicious and nutritious meals. The program promotes healthier cooking techniques and food choices to enhance overall health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. By encouraging viewers to adopt a more mindful approach to cooking and eating, UAB hopes to impact the well-being of individuals and communities positively.

During the cooking series, UAB's dining staff demonstrated healthy and delicious cooking options. One of the outstanding features of Cooking Health Smart is its commitment to accessibility and inclusivity. The program offers a range of resources and cooking styles suitable for various skill levels, from beginners to seasoned home cooks.

A core component of UAB Cooking Health Smart is its emphasis on nutritional education. The program goes beyond just teaching recipes and cooking techniques; it delves into the science of nutrition, helping participants understand the importance of different food groups and their role in supporting overall health. By arming individuals with knowledge, they can make informed choices when selecting ingredients and planning balanced meals.



## Three in Student Affairs named as Diversity Champions

On March 2, the BMEN organization was awarded the UAB President's Diversity Champion award in acknowledgement of the work they do on campus and in the Birmingham community. In addition to this recognition, BMEN advisor Sharifa Wip and mentor Yancey Williams, II were recognized for their work supporting diversity and inclusion on campus with individual President's Diversity Champion awards.

## CSSA focuses on restorative justice

During the 2022-23 academic year, UAB's Community Standards and Student Accountability (CSSA) took significant steps towards fostering a socially just culture and community through restorative justice initiatives. CSSA, in their ongoing commitment to equity, inclusion, and justice, focused on restorative justice processes. They observed a notable 37% increase in Educational Conversations, during which CSSA staff actively engaged in restorative justice practices, ultimately leading to the successful implementation of alternative resolutions. Additionally, as part of their dedication to creating a values-based environment, CSSA comprehensively reviewed and revamped the Student Conduct Code to align it with principles of equity, inclusion, and justice, further contributing to the cultivation of a socially just campus community at UAB.

## SJAC hosts 7th annual ORCA Conference

The Social Justice Advocacy Council (SJAC) hosted its seventh annual Organized Radical Collegiate Activism Conference on February 10. The theme for the conference was "Finding Your Why: Sparking Social Change."

This unique student-led conference addressed the challenges and advantages of doing social justice advocacy work on college campuses. This year's conference marked the first time since 2020 that ORCA had been held to full capacity, featuring 14 unique seminars throughout three, one-hour sessions. The session leaders were made up of student leadership, a diverse group of student organizations active on UAB's campus and guest speakers from across the Birmingham community.

## Student Affairs hosts Don't Stay Silent Disco

Wellness Promotion, Collegiate Recovery Community (CRC) and Student Media collaborated to host the Don't Stay Silent Disco in October. This event was selected as one of the key events during UAB's first Wellness Week. The program focused on student engagement and providing ways to connect with peers while learning about alcohol safely. During the event 245 students attended to eat a hearty meal, dance, socialize and have fun during a peak time in the semester when students are feeling stressed.



### **Blazers kick off LGBTQ+ history month with second Coming Out on the Green & annual Drag Ball**

This year Queer Peers helped kick off LGBTQ+ History Month off with its second annual Drag Ball. The Drag Ball served as the culmination of the “Coming Out On The Green Week” events. Students participated in the Drag Ball, with a guest Drag performer from the Birmingham area, on Sept. 30 at the HSC amphitheater. In addition to having a fun and inviting atmosphere, the event sought to celebrate the diversity of the UAB student community. This year’s theme was “Under the Sea.” All students of any gender identity were welcomed to attend and participate.

### **DSS helps maintain university compliance efforts**

As an office responsible for compliance related to state and federal disability legislation, DSS provided 449 faculty consultations (a 49% increase from AY22).

### **Student Health Services promotes health equity through services**

As part of its equity and inclusion goals Student Health Services participated in a Safe Zone Update training in June provided by Sarah MacCarthy, Magic City LGBTQ Health Studies Endowed Professor. In addition, SHS continued to explore ways to ensure health equity through low to no cost testing, accessible services

and addressing language barriers.

### **Student Housing and Residence Life**

adapted the Residential Curriculum model to incorporate health promotion and social justice programs within established academic learning and programmatic outcomes. They were recognized at the ACPA Institute on Curricular Approach as a Showcase Institution.

### **Queer Peers co-host Lavender Gala**

Queer Peers and the UAB Student Art Council collaborated to host the annual Student Arts and Lavender Gala at AEIVA. The event supports student philanthropy, artistry and expression. The event included an awards ceremony, fashion show, BFA exhibitions, art market and donation drive. The gala also served as an opportunity to recognize graduating LGBTQIA+ seniors who received their lavender cords to wear during spring commencement ceremonies.

### **Student Housing and Residence Life**

collaborated with Sustainability and Energy Management to pilot a Reducing Electricity and Water Consumption competition in the residence halls. McMahon Hall won in the Reducing Water Consumption category by reducing consumption by 22% over the previous twelve-month period. Blazer Hall won in the Reducing Electricity Consumption category by reducing electricity use by 46% over the previous twelve-month period.



### **SMDP hosts Camille Armstrong Week**

BSAC and NPHC collaborated to host Camille Armstrong Memorial Week. Camille Y. Armstrong was a well-rounded UAB student in the 1980's who tragically lost her life weeks before graduating. Camille Week and the Camille Armstrong Memorial Scholarship are main fundraisers for the scholarship fund. Camille's life and legacy has been traditionally celebrated for over 30 years.

### **CSSA and Wellness Promotion collaborate for alcohol education**

Community Standards & Student Accountability has collaborated with Wellness Promotion to provide alcohol education to students who have violated the alcohol policy. 96% rated the program good (23%) or excellent (73%).



**DRAG BALL**

# Fostering A Sense of Belonging

## Inaugural Student Affairs Crawfish Boil: an unforgettable celebration of fun and flavor

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Division of Student Affairs hosted its first annual Crawfish Boil on April 17, and what an extraordinary event it was! The entire Blazer community came together to revel in a day filled with mouthwatering delicacies, live entertainment, and an electric atmosphere that left everyone craving for more.

From the moment the gates opened, attendees were greeted with signature event t-shirts as well as the enticing aroma of fresh, Cajun-seasoned crawfish wafting through the air. The event showcased a traditional crawfish boil and a range of sides that delighted even the most discerning taste buds.

Aside from the remarkable cuisine, the UAB Crawfish Boil was a visual and auditory feast. The main stage boasted a lineup of talented student performers, including a student DJ who captivated the audience. The event featured a variety of engaging activities and attractions. Students enjoyed various inflatable play areas, and interactive games. DIY activities, friendly competitive games, a bull riding station, vendor booths and food trucks added to the ambiance.

"It was incredible to witness the sense of community and camaraderie that the Crawfish Boil brought," said John R. Jones, III, Ph.D., Vice President for Student Affairs. "I'm sure this will become an annual gathering that will become a cherished tradition for our community, providing a platform for people to come together, celebrate, and create lasting memories."



## UAB Off-Campus students forge strong community bonds

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) recognizes the importance of fostering a sense of community among its off-campus students. The Office of Off-Campus Student & Family Engagement has taken significant strides to integrate the transfer student population into the Blazer community. By transforming the lounge into a dedicated transfer student center and ramping up intentional programming, they've successfully encouraged student engagement and the enhancement of the student experience.

The results were remarkable: during National Transfer Student Week, the office witnessed an astounding 240% increase in traffic.

One of the standout initiatives that has helped off-campus Blazers find their place in the UAB community is "Wake Up Wednesdays." Every Wednesday, the Office of Off-Campus Student and Family Engagement extends an invitation to off-campus students to join them in the Off-Campus Student Lounge. While there, they can savor delicious donuts, pastries, and coffee. It's not just about the food; it's about the bonds and connections that form during these gatherings, creating a vibrant and supportive community for UAB's off-campus students.

### Students find connections during Blazer Welcome and Connect Fest

UAB is thriving as a place where students can feel connected to the community. This is exemplified through two significant events that took place during the Fall 2022 semester - Blazer Welcome and Connect Fest. These initiatives not only fostered a strong sense of unity among the students but also witnessed remarkable growth in participation.

Blazer Welcome, a cornerstone of UAB's commitment to student engagement, hosted 52 events during the first four weeks of the

semester. These events drew an impressive 6,897 participants, signifying a 41% increase from the Fall 2021 semester. 79% of first-time freshmen chose to be a part of Blazer Welcome activities, highlighting the program's effectiveness in making newcomers feel welcomed and integrated into the UAB family right from the start.

Further enhancing this sense of belonging is Connect Fest, UAB's first and largest Involvement Fair. This event proved to be a hub of student interaction and representation. A total of 1,843 students actively participated, with 228 proudly representing various student organizations. Additionally, 100 student organizations actively engaged with students during Connect Fest.

The combination of Blazer Welcome and Connect Fest showcases UAB's commitment to fostering a strong sense of belonging among its students. These events not only bring together a diverse array of individuals but also provide ample opportunities for students to find their niches within the UAB community. The substantial increase in participation compared to previous years underscores the university's ongoing efforts to create an inclusive and welcoming environment where every student can call UAB their home.





## Blazer Spirit Council hosts Homecoming events

The Blazer Spirit Council orchestrated a week of festivities that breathed life and enthusiasm into the very heart of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. This annual Homecoming Spirit Week was not merely a sequence of events; it was an embodiment of institutional pride and a celebration of the rich tapestry of UAB traditions.

The week kicked off with the "Movie on the Green." Against the backdrop of a star-studded sky, students gathered on the lush green lawns, creating a sea of camaraderie under the open sky.

Following this cinematic extravaganza, the Blazer Showdown added a competitive edge to the festivities. Teams from various corners of the UAB campus battled it out in a friendly yet fiercely spirited competition. Beyond the sportsmanship and rivalry, this event united students from diverse backgrounds. It was an embodiment of the university's core values: excellence, collaboration, and determination.

As the week progressed, the Blaze the Night Block Party transformed the campus into an electrifying carnival. Music thumped in the background, as students danced under the neon lights. Food stalls offered an array of cuisines, tantalizing taste buds and bringing people together over shared

meals. The Block Party wasn't just a party; it was a sensory explosion of sights, sounds, and flavors that etched unforgettable memories into the minds of attendees.

A pinnacle of Homecoming festivities, the parade was a vivid display of UAB's pride and creativity. Floats adorned with intricate designs, costumes, and spirited marchers moved through the campus streets. The parade was not just a procession; it was a visual representation of the collective creativity and innovation of UAB's community.

The week culminated with the Student Tailgate, a celebration that brought UAB's sports traditions to the forefront. Decked out in green and gold, students gathered to rally their support for UAB's football team. It wasn't just about cheering for victories; it was about forging a bond that transcended the field.

In total, these events organized by the Blazer Spirit Council drew a staggering 3,170 participants across the seven offerings. Beyond the numbers, however, lay the profound impact these events had on the UAB community. They ignited a spirit of togetherness, deepened the love for UAB, and left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of all who were fortunate enough to be a part of this Homecoming Spirit Week.



## UAB breaks ground on new organizations facility

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) celebrated a groundbreaking ceremony on February 23rd for its highly anticipated New Student Organization Facility. The new construction, which will have office and meeting space for UAB's fraternities and sororities, is set to open its doors Fall of 2024. The over 11,000 sq. ft. facility is situated on the corner of 11th Avenue South and 14th Street South.

UAB's commitment to enhancing the campus environment and fostering student engagement is epitomized by this groundbreaking. The New Student Organization Facility is poised to become a center for academic, cultural, and extracurricular activities for students.





## Taste of UABham fosters a strong sense of belonging among students

UAB's annual Taste of UABham reported record-breaking numbers for its 2022 edition. With over 650 attendees checking in and hundreds more roaming around, this year's Taste of UABham has not only captivated the UAB community but has also strengthened their connection to the vibrant city of Birmingham.

The event brought together a diverse array of local vendors. Participating vendors included 1918 Catering, Tistea, CoCo Crabs, Terrific Treatz, Who Dat Snoballs, Not Ya Average Leaf, Hand in Paw, Vulcan Museum, McWane Science Center, Alabama Peanut Company, Birmingham Boulders, CommuteSmart, and URec.

According to a comprehensive survey conducted after the event, the overwhelming majority of respondents, nearly 90 percent, expressed their intention to attend Taste of UABham again in the fall of 2023. These responses underscore the event's popularity among UAB students, faculty, and staff. 64 percent of those surveyed reported feeling a stronger connection to the city after attending the event. This suggests that Taste of UABham goes beyond just offering a fun and enjoyable experience—it fosters a genuine sense of belonging among the university's students.

## UAB remembers Blazers lost



On April 18, the University of Alabama at Birmingham honored the lives of active students, faculty, and staff who passed away during the past year (from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023) during

its annual "Remembering Our Blazers: A Memorial Gathering." The event took place at noon in the Hill Student Center Ballrooms. The names of the 27 Blazers (four students and 23 faculty & staff members) were read out loud, and remembered for their impact.

## Dining welcomes campus partners to WOW

Campus Dining continued partnerships with Student Multicultural & Diversity Programs and collaboration with various organizations to host events at our WOW Café. Some of these events included the Poetic Justice Coffee House, hosted by the Social Justice Advocacy Council and Black Student Awareness Committee, as well as other events hosted at our location. Campus Dining also partnered with the Student Art Council, Queer Peers, Blazer Kitchen, and the UAB Jazz Ensemble to bring diverse events and programs to our community.

## Student Media hosts Black Focus Film Festival

Black Focus Film Festival is a newer addition to Student Media and is now in its second year. This festival highlights Black filmmakers and gives them a space to submit their films and network with other Black creatives in the state. Student Media has a team of students that run the festival from logistics to programming and workshops. Black Focus received a dozen submissions and more than 70 students and community members attended.



## Fall Family Weekend welcomes over 1,000 family members

Fall Family Weekend, held October 16-18, had a total attendance of 1,735, consisting of 1,194 family members and 541 students. The event experienced a 38% increase in attendance by first generation families and students and a 22% increase of senior students and families.







# Removing Barriers to Enhance Student Success

## Blazer Market Route removes barriers for students

In late February, Sara abu Amarah is wrapping up her second semester as a master's student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. It's her first time away from her home country of Jordan and living in the United States of America. She's currently studying anthropology and human rights. Behind Amarah, sitting against the window, is a purple suitcase with a bandana tied around the handle. For Amarah, grocery shopping isn't grabbing a pair of car keys and hopping on the highway or relying on food delivery apps. Instead, for the past three weeks, she's been waking up early on Saturday mornings to ride UAB's Blazer Market Route.

Designed to remove barriers towards food insecurity when grocery stores in Birmingham are scarce, the Blazer Market Route offers students a new bus route that stops at Walmart, Mi Pueblo, and Super Oriental Market.

"We think about basic needs and insecurities, but one thing we often forget about is transportation and security with that," said Debbie Morgette, assistant director of UAB Student Assistance and Support. Morgette went on to stress the importance of meeting the needs of students who live on campus and International students who don't have access to their own vehicles.

International students made up over 2.5% of UAB's undergraduate population in Fall 2022. On the bus that misty morning, Amarah raves about the convenience of the service, "I've had a difficult time getting groceries, Ubers get to be expensive and this service gives us more options of going to three stores instead of just one." She talks about her anxiety about being an International student and how a service like the Blazer Market Route makes her feel welcome on campus.

Housed in Student Affairs, UAB Student Assistance and Support offers undergraduate and graduate students a variety of resources to aid them in times of financial strain. Whether helping students gain emergency grants to repair their car, guiding them to mental health resources on campus, giving them access to Blazer Kitchen at the Hill Student Center, and more, this office is a vital part of student affairs' mission to remove barriers to student success.

When returning to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic, UAB Student Assistance & Support saw an increase in student engagement and worked to increase their office offerings. In the Fall of 2022, the department was awarded a \$25,000 grant from Auburn University Hunger Solutions Institute, funded by the Alabama Campus Coalition for Basic Needs. The coalition aims to empower students to succeed in their higher education journey by ensuring their basic needs are met, specifically focusing on nutrition and food security.



"What it all comes down to is access," Morgette stated, "There are a lot of great things about our campus but the nearest grocery store is also one of the most expensive ones—and even that's a half mile away."

In a 2021 UAB Assessment & Planning survey, results showed that 27.4% of graduate students and 34.4% of undergraduate students reported that in the last 30 days, they had eaten less than they should because they did not have enough money for food and/or groceries.

"We can't change the infrastructure of our city but we can open up that access and make something like getting fresh and healthy groceries more accessible for our students," Morgette went on to say.

Thomas Chandler has been a bus driver for over 40 years, driving the Blazer Express for the past two, "I could be retired," he says, "but I continue to do so because of how important services like this are." On Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons, he stands outside of the bus and greets every student. The Blazer Market Route is just getting started, and already he recognizes and has regular riders each week. He points them out as they walk towards the stop in front of the Hill Student Center, "He rides just to get out of the library," then to a group of three students crossing in front of Bartow Arena, "They ride the bus together every weekend.

"I plan to ride every week," says Narisetty Vignan Uday Chand Chowdary, a graduate student from India studying computer science, "I want my groceries to be as fresh as possible so the Saturday schedule works best for me." He goes on to say that before the Blazer Market Route he couldn't cook as often and this service allows him to make food from his culture every week.

Chowdary stated how essential the service has become to International students in the UAB community, "We don't need to search for a ride or buy a ride," he says, "UAB already has a plan for us."







## UAB selected as member of the First Scholars Network

The Center for First-generation Student Success, an initiative of NASPA and the Suder Foundation, recently selected the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) as one of seventy-six new members of the First Scholars Network for 2023-24. To be selected as a First Scholars Network member, UAB displayed a demonstrated commitment to improving experiences and advancing success for first generation college students.

Powered by the Center for First-Generation Student Success, the First Scholars Network is a four-phase approach that allows institutions of higher education to advance student success through establishing communities of practice, gaining knowledge of resources, and establishing peer networks. More than 350 institutions of higher education have entered the Network, representing 49 states and the District of Columbia.

In this first phase of the First Scholars Network, selected institutions

participated in the First Scholars Network Virtual Kick-off on June 2, 2023. As a Network Member, interested faculty and staff are afforded opportunities to engage with peer institutions also working to create environments that improve the experiences and success of first-generation students, and will participate in monthly calls, professional development, goal setting, blog development, annual reporting, and more.

After successful completion of the Network Member phase, institutions progress to the second phase, First-gen Forward, after which it is eligible to become a First Scholars Institution. First Scholars is the third phase of the First Scholars Network and serves as the Center's customized approach to intentional institutional transformation in an effort to advance student outcomes. Ultimately, all Network institutions strive for national leadership as a First Scholars Champion Campus.

## Student Affairs hosts First-Generation College Celebration

On Nov. 8 UAB Student Affairs hosted the First-Generation College Celebration to honor the anniversary of the signing of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Students, faculty and staff enjoyed a series of activities focused on celebrating the success of first-generation students. The highlight of the event was an intimate conversation with first-generation college student and star of the hit Netflix original series "Orange is the New Black" Dascha Polanco.

## UAB supports pregnant and parenting students

During academic year 2022-23 Title IX hosted a series of workshops aimed at teaching students, faculty and staff about the resources and services (developing an academic plan, requesting accommodations, lactation resources, counseling and wellness services, housing, childcare, and nutrition assistance) available to all Blazers seeking support through their pregnancy and parenting journeys. 65 Blazers participated in Title IX's Supporting Pregnant & Parenting Students luncheon and another 29 participants from 11 different schools attended Title IX's first pregnancy / parenting workshop for faculty and staff.

## Little Blazer Wishes help make the holidays bright

In only its third year, the University of Alabama at Birmingham's Little Blazer Wishes program distributed presents to a record number of Blazer families this holiday season. 116 families were sponsored by Little Blazer Wishes this year. Little Blazer Wishes offers anonymous gift sponsorship to Blazers who may otherwise struggle to fulfill their children's holiday wish lists. Parenting students, undergraduate and graduate, distance-learning, or in-person students can participate. Since its launch in 2019, the Little Blazer Wishes program, coordinated through the UAB Student Affairs Office of Off-Campus Student and Family Engagement, has provided holiday assistance to over 240 Blazer families.

## Student Health Services and UAB Eye Care partnered for eye exams

Did you know that during academic year 2022-23 UAB Eye Care hosted a clinic session at Student Health Services on Tuesday afternoons to see UAB students for eye concerns?

**Student Affairs Marketing & Communications** developed a strategy to ensure that 99% of all marketing materials and student stories reflect, celebrate and are accessible to the diverse and inclusive communities of UAB.

## In academic year 2022-23, Veteran Services

established the first ever UAB Veteran Advisory Board, with membership comprising of the UAB Registrar's Office, One Stop, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, Student Accounting, Graduate Studies and Institutional Effectiveness. The board was formed to promote retention, success and facilitate the transition into UAB for veteran students.

## FSL Hosts Hazing Prevention Week

Student Affairs Fraternity and Sorority Life hosted Hazing Prevention Week (Sept. 19-23). This year's theme was "Blazers Don't Haze: Hazing Prevention Week 2022." During the week-long series of events attendees received information on anti-hazing efforts and were empowered to raise awareness and promote prevention. Participants learned ways to build brotherhood/sisterhood safely and healthily without hazing behaviors.

## Veteran Services collaborates with local agencies to aid student veterans

Veteran Services collaborated with the Birmingham VA Medical Center, Priority Veterans and Still Serving Veterans to help alleviate homelessness among UAB's student veteran population. During the collaboration student veterans were assisted with housing, food, clothing and medical care – which included mental health care that aided in suicide prevention.







# Developing Leaders Who Create Change



## BMEN honored by City Council, celebrate crystal anniversary

The Blazer Male Excellence Network (BMEN) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham has emerged as a powerful force in transforming students into leaders, earning recognition from both the local community and the institution itself.

During the October 4th City Council meeting, BMEN received a well-deserved honor from Mayor Randall Woodfin and the Birmingham City Council. They commended BMEN for its remarkable achievements and dedication to making a positive impact on the lives of its participants over the past 15 years. Mayor Woodfin acknowledged the group's contribution to helping more black men successfully graduate, stating, "Thanks to the diligent work of UAB's Blazer Male Excellence Network, better known as BMEN, more and more black men are reaching the finish line of graduation." In recognition of his support, Mayor Woodfin was even named an honorary member of BMEN and received a BMEN lapel pin during the council meeting.



This honor coincided with BMEN's crystal anniversary, celebrating 15 years of excellence during the 2022-23 academic year. BMEN operates as a peer mentoring program that provides essential academic and social support to Black male students at UAB. The 15th-anniversary gala, attended by over 250 people, brought together not only current members but also alumni from previous BMEN cohorts. This celebration serves as a testament to BMEN's enduring impact and its role in nurturing and developing leaders among the student body.

In essence, BMEN's recognition by the City Council and the celebration of its 15th anniversary underscore the program's significant role in fostering leadership and academic success among Black male students at UAB. Through its dedication to mentorship and support, BMEN continues to empower students to reach their full potential and become leaders in their own right.



**The Hill Student Center developed and piloted a leadership program for student employees.** The program was designed to promote success in personal, professional, and academic goals based on CAS standards and NACE Career Readiness Competencies. HSC's first cohort included eight student staff members, six eventually serving in HSC leadership roles.

**Student Media's Aura placed third in the College Media Association's national Pinnacle Awards** for literary arts magazine design and received an honorable mention for video public service announcement. Aura also published a standalone print edition in spring 2023, the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.



# Shaping the Field of Student Affairs



## UAB hosts inaugural in-person U.S. Health Promoting Universities summit

Nearly three years after becoming the first university in the United States to adopt the Okanagan Charter and receiving global recognition as the country's first Health Promoting University, the University of Alabama at Birmingham recently hosted the first in-person summit on its campus in February 2023.

The summit, titled "Centering Equity While Moving Through Wellness To Wellbeing," played host to 173 participants, representing 57 institutions from 26 states. The summit was designed to provide participants a better understanding of the key aspirations of the Okanagan Charter and how to apply them to move their campus forward beyond wellness to a health-promoting campus. Similar to the UAB Blazer Core, the summit schedule was developed utilizing the City as Classroom philosophy. Participants heard from national and international leaders in health promotion and visited numerous historic museums and sites in and around our city, connecting what they learn to action.

In addition to gaining valuable insights on the deeper meaning of well-being and health promotion from global and institutional perspectives, participants were treated to a U.S. Health Promoting

Campuses Network President's panel, which included UAB President Ray L. Watts, M.D.

The International Health Promoting Campuses Network is guided by the Okanagan Charter, which calls on postsecondary schools to infuse health into campus culture and lead health promotion action and collaboration locally and globally. Created in June 2015, the charter provides institutions with a common language, principles, and framework to become health-promoting campuses with cultures of compassion, well-being, and equity.

"I am so proud to work at UAB, where we are not just the first health-promoting campus in the U.S. but also the host of the first in-person USHPCN Summit," Rebecca Kennedy, Ph.D., assistant vice president for Student Health and Wellbeing in the UAB Division of Student Affairs. "We provided participants with a set of transformative experiences to develop a community of health-promoting universities filled with students, staff and faculty across multiple disciplines who are working collaboratively across our country to address real-world challenges and opportunities."

Each HPU develops its own strategic plan for how it lives out and implements health promotion on its campus and in its community. By doing so, health-promoting universities and colleges improve the health of the people who live, learn, work, and play on their campuses and strengthen the ecological, social, and economic sustainability of their communities and wider society.







## Student Affairs hosts 2022 SACSA Conference

The University of Alabama at Birmingham hosted the 2022 Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA) Annual Conference on November 5-7. The conference, in collaboration with NASPA Region III, brought together student affairs professionals from across the southern United States for a week of learning, networking, and inspiration. 2022 marked the first in-person SACSA conference since 2019.

As the participants arrived at the conference venue, the air was buzzing with excitement. This year's theme, "Elevating Voices to Enhance Our Future," struck a chord with everyone, reflecting the growing importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. The conference committee planned a diverse program featuring renowned speakers, engaging workshops, and thought-provoking panel discussions.

The opening reception was a festive atmosphere filled with food, dancing and camaraderie. Conference participants enjoyed an incredible dining opportunity

provided by Sodexo, with a menu that included southern staples like fried tomatoes, shrimp, grits, and chicken and waffles. In addition to the food, there was an art gallery sponsored by Student Media, a 360 photo booth, a jazz and poetry station and a sensory room. Singer/songwriter Walker Burroughs was the headline performer.

Throughout the conference, participants attended sessions that covered a wide range of topics. There were sessions on fostering inclusive leadership, addressing mental health challenges, supporting LGBTQ+ students, and dismantling systemic barriers in education. The presenters shared innovative strategies, best practices, and personal experiences, encouraging attendees to think critically and expand their horizons.

The 2022 SACSA Annual Conference with NASPA Region III left an indelible mark on all who participated. It sparked conversations, fostered connections, and inspired transformative change.





# THE BLAZER WAY

**UAB STUDENT AFFAIRS RANKED AMONG  
MOST PROMISING PLACES TO WORK IN 2023**

**Diverse**

**MOST PROMISING  
PLACES TO WORK  
IN STUDENT AFFAIRS**

**• 2023 •**



The University of Alabama at Birmingham Division of Student Affairs has been named one of the “Most Promising Places to Work in Student Affairs” for 2023 by the American College Personnel Association – College Student Educators International (ACPA) and Diverse: Issues In Higher Education.

This honor was given to 27 schools nationwide. UAB Student Affairs earned this recognition because of its commitment to accountability, collaboration, equity, innovation, integrity, and wellbeing.

The award focuses on workplace diversity, staffing practices and work environment, and uses a web-based survey to examine family friendliness, salary and benefits and professional development opportunities.

*“In our division we always strive for excellence, whether that is removing a barrier to success for a student, increasing access to services, or to collaborate with partners across campus to be innovative and hold one another accountable, Student Affairs is a place where all Blazers can thrive,”*

*– Student Affairs Vice President  
John R. Jones, III, Ph.D.*

“It is an incredible honor for our staff to be recognized in this way. The work doesn’t stop here, we will continue to build on our successes for the next generation of Student Affairs professionals.”

**UAB** STUDENT  
AFFAIRS

The University of Alabama at Birmingham



**Diverse**  
ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION®



## Student Affairs honors colleagues during end-of-year awards celebration

The UAB Division of Student Affairs Professional Development Awards Committee hosted its annual awards event to celebrate the remarkable work of its colleagues.

And the winners were:

### **Outstanding Star**

(Support Professional)

**Synclaire Casselberry**

*Community Standards & Student Accountability*

### **Outstanding Star**

(Professional)

**Joy Burrell**

*Disability Support Services*

### **New Professional of the Year**

**Taylor Stewart**

*Marketing & Communications*

### **Outstanding Contributor to Higher Education**

**Rebecca Kennedy, Ph.D.**

*Assistant Vice President of Student Health & Wellbeing*

### **Outstanding Student Affairs Partners**

**Wayne Nall**

*Maintenance Field Supervisor, UAB Facilities*

### **Andy Marsch Legacy Award**

**Michael Faircloth, M.D.**

*Student Health Services*

### **Program of the Year**

**Blazer Market Route**

*Student Assistance & Support*

### **Event of the Year**

**Take Back the Night**

*Wellness Promotion*

### **Department of the Year**

**Campus Dining**



Synclaire Casselberry



Joy Burrell



Taylor Stewart



Rebecca Kennedy, Ph.D.



Wayne Nall



Michael Faircloth, M.D.



Debbie Morgette, Student Assistance & Support | Blazer Market Route



Wellness Promotion | Take Back the Night



Campus Dining



## UAB's Campus Dining delivers excellence

On May 5, UAB's Campus Dining was named the Division of Student Affairs Department of the Year, during the annual Student Affairs Awards Celebration. The award recognizes their outstanding commitment to providing top-notch culinary experiences to students, staff, and visitors alike.

Here are some of the reasons why they won the award.

*Campus Dining* achieved an annual satisfaction survey score of **84% in Resident Dining, Retail, and Customer Service** by enhancing their services through collaboration while **highlighting culinary achievement** and **healthy dining options** across venues.



### Dining hosts Feel-Good Fridays

Campus Dining's "Our Feel-Good Fridays" program proved to be a testament to Student Affairs' commitment to the mental well-being of our students. Through this program, students were provided with tools and guidance to develop and maintain safe mental health practices. Each Friday students were provided with resources like face masks, mental health daily challenge calendars, and grow your-own plant kits, to promote a healthy and balanced lifestyle.



### Campus Dining fed the world in 2022

Campus Dining was given a tall order to complete during the World Games 2022 in Birmingham. Serving 10,000 meals to up to 3,400 diners per day, all while navigating labor and supply chain challenges while meeting impeccable food safety standards.



### Blazers donate meals through swipe twice program

Student Assistance & Support partnered with Campus Dining to Run our Swipe Twice meal program. In effort to fight food insecurity on campus, students stopped by to donate a meal swipe to a fellow Blazer. 150 total meals were donated during the event.

# Leadership Roles



**Jackie Alexander**  
**College Media Association**  
*President-Elect*



**Darien Garrison**  
**ACUI**  
*Membership Experience  
Coordinator  
Recognition Coordinator*



**Jeremiah Johnson**  
**ACUI**  
*Business Manager*



**Rebecca Kennedy**  
**USHPCN**  
*US Health Promoting Campuses  
Network Chair*  
**IHPU&C**  
*International Health Promoting  
Universities & Colleges Steering  
Committee Member*



**Patricia Martinez**  
**ACUHO-I**  
*Foundation President - Chair  
Future of the Profession -  
Communicating Value  
Taskforce Chair  
Core Documents Alignment  
Steering Committee*



**Ashton Reno**  
**ACUI**  
*Conference Planning Team*



**Stacy Rowan**  
**Association of Fraternity/  
Sorority Advisors**  
*Perspectives Editorial Board*



**Mary Wallace**  
**NASPA**  
*AVP Steering Committee  
Advisory Committee for Student  
Success | Conference in Higher  
Education  
Subcommittee Chair for Engage-  
ment Lounges for NASPA 2023*  
**Center for First-Generation  
Student Success**  
*Center for First-Generation  
Student Success Advocacy  
Group  
Editorial Board | Journal for  
First-Generation Student Success*



**Seneca Wilson**  
**NIRSA Foundation**  
*NIRSA Foundation  
Board Member*



**5**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE



Caroline Cartledge



Lauren Cotant



Aydrian Miles



Kasey Robinson



Dennis Scott



Mary Wallace



Herbert Wilkerson



Michele Bischoff

**10**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE



Jennifer Liptrot



Monica Merriweather



Leslie Riley

**15**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE



Sherri Moultrie

**20**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE



Marc Booker



Allison Solomon

*Student  
Affairs  
Milestones*

**25**  
YEARS OF  
SERVICE



Phillip Bivens







# Assessment



The Division of Student Affairs conducts systematic assessment following the Five-Year Assessment Cycle. Departments developed data-informed strategic goals and implemented these goals throughout the academic year. These goals align with divisional strategic priorities, address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic areas of the university, and incorporate student learning outcomes, key performance indicators, and assessment strategies.

Ongoing assessments are conducted at Division, department and program levels. We collect data regularly to assess student participation, engagement, satisfaction, program outcomes, and learning outcomes. We use multiple data collection methods to assess program attendance, service utilization, office visits and to understand student perception, experience and learning. We examined how student engagement in Student Affairs programs and services contribute to student success such as GPA, retention, and sense of belonging.

## Major assessment projects that we have completed in Academic Year 2022 - 2023:

- Fall 2022 Student Engagement Assessment
- Removing Barriers Focus Group Study
- Basic Needs Coalition Survey data analysis and report
- Homecoming Survey data analysis and report
- End of Year Residence Hall Survey data analysis and report
- Student Engagement in Second Year Experience Programs
- First year student engagement in Housing and Residence Life programs
- 2022-2023 National College Health Assessment Survey

A **higher percentage of students** who attended **Fall 2022 Student Affairs signature programs** reported **a sense of belonging** than students who didn't attend any program, **70% vs. 56%**.

A **higher percentage of students** who attended **Fall 2022 Student Affairs signature programs** reported **connection to UAB's campus community** than students who didn't attend any program, **62% vs. 32%**.









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## THIS IS THE **BLAZER** WAY

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I HOLD **MYSELF** ACCOUNTABLE to represent our **UNIQUE** community WITH *honor* AND *integrity*. We *cherish* **DIVERSITY**, EMBRACE and CELEBRATE **ALL**. We cultivate progress, **STRIVE** for **EXCELLENCE** through **INNOVATION** and *service*. We champion *scholarship* to **TRANSFORM** learners into **LEADERS**. We **believe anything** is possible and **PURSUE** knowledge that *enriches* the **WORLD**. WE REMAIN EVER *faithful*, ever **LOYAL**, to these *shared* **BELIEFS**.

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## I AM A **UAB BLAZER**

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At UAB, we take pride having a culture of service to each other and to our community. Walking out these principles together unites us, and serves as a bridge that stretches from the hospital to the university to the administration to our alumni. We are a UAB community.

**This is the Blazer Way.**

