May:
Mental Health Month

When we think about cancer, heart disease, or diabetes, we don’t wait years to treat them. We begin with prevention. When people are in the first stage of those diseases, and are beginning to show signs of symptoms, we try immediately to reverse these symptoms. We don’t ignore them, we develop a plan of action to reverse and sometimes stop the progression of the disease. So why aren’t we doing the same for individuals who are dealing with potentially serious mental illness?

When you or someone close to you starts to experience the early warning signs of mental illness, knowing what the risk factors and symptoms are will help catch them early. Experiencing symptoms such as loss of sleep, feeling tired for no reason, feeling low, feeling anxious, or hearing voices, shouldn’t be ignored or brushed aside in the hopes that they go away. We need to address these symptoms early, identify the underlying disease, and plan an appropriate course of action on a path towards overall health. Mental health conditions should be addressed long before they reach the most critical points in the disease process. Many people do not seek treatment in the early stages of mental illnesses because they don’t recognize the symptoms. Up to 84% of the time between the first signs of mental illness and first treatment is spent not recognizing the symptoms.

Mental Health America’s screening tools can help. Take an online screening at www.mhascreening.org; it’s anonymous, free and a private way to learn about your mental health and see if you are showing warning signs of a mental illness. A screening only takes a few minutes, and after you are finished you will be given information about the next steps you should take based on the results. A screening is not a diagnosis, but it can be a helpful tool for starting a conversation with your doctor or a loved one about your mental health. Mental illnesses are not only common, they are treatable. There is a wide variety of treatment options for mental illnesses, ranging from talk therapy to medication to peer support, and it may take some time for a person to find the right treatment or combination of treatments that works best for them. But when they do, the results can be truly amazing and life changing. Be aware of your mental health and get screened today!
Employee of the Month
March

BIRTHDAYS
Ashly Parker
Tom Wagy
Betsy Sanz
Keith Beason
Gary Bugh
Katy Elkins
Ed Emilia
Deborah Holder
Ramona Green
Tiffany Ray
Craig Nakashian
LeAnne Bruce
Elizabeth Patterson
Olivia Garcia
Jade Jenkins
Glenda Ballard
Kevin Ells
Teri Sartor

Could Be You!

Do you know someone who is an exemplary member of the Eagle family? Has this person demonstrated outstanding customer service and gone above and beyond their normal job duties? If so, please nominate them for Employee of the Month!!

Go to the Staff Council webpage to download the EOM form. Please submit forms to Jayson Ferguson or any member of the Staff Council.

Deadline to apply is the 15th of the month at 5:00pm.

Meet Our
New Hires

Ashley Newton
Police Officer I
**New Wellness Site**

[http://tamut.edu/About/Administration/Human-Resources/Wellness.html](http://tamut.edu/About/Administration/Human-Resources/Wellness.html)

Check out the new Wellness Page!
- Weekly health tips
- Monthly Healthy TAMUT newsletter
- Walking Maps

Any suggestions for the page, please contact Ayla Baldwin, ayla.baldwin@tamut.edu.

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**Shilling Lane Closure**

Shilling Lane will be closed to through traffic by way of Summerhill Road **beginning Monday, April 6**. The closure could last up to six weeks.

Construction work will be taking place at the curve on Shilling with the new extension of University Avenue to Summerhill. During the closure, the A&M-Texarkana campus cannot be accessed by way of Summerhill Road to Shilling to University Ave.

Graduation Commencement is May 16th, 2015 at 10AM!

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**External Employment**

Reason for Policy: External consulting or other outside employment should not prevent an employee from accomplishing employment duties and responsibilities.

Full-time employees are expected to devote their time to their assigned duties and responsibilities on a full-time basis. Permission to engage in external consulting or other outside employment may be granted in accordance with regulations and rules adopted by the system and the employing member as long as all of the following conditions are met:

(a) Permission to engage in the employment is requested and received prior to the time the employee accepts external employment;

(b) Activities related to the external employment are not reasonably expected to interfere with the regular work of the employee;

(c) The employee complies with all applicable laws and professional standards of conduct, including conflicts of interest standards;

(d) The employee certifies that research performed in connection with the external employment will be conducted in an objective and scientific manner and in accordance with the highest ethical standards of the employee’s profession;

(e) The member uses an approval process for consulting or other outside employment related to a faculty member’s field or discipline that is adopted in accordance with the regulation developed under Section 3.

Failure to comply with any of these conditions may result in withdrawal of permission to engage in external employment. If you have external employment, please use the HR website to fill out the external employment application and turn it in to HR.
**Look Who’s Walking**

Dog owners walk nearly twice as much as their neighbors without dogs, according to a study in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. Maybe it’s the extra duty to get up and out for exercise that gives dog owners a new leash on being active with their pets.

**Sound Asleep**

If you live to age 85, you may have slept nearly 250,000 hours—more than 10,000 full days, according to the Baylor University researchers. Sleep is not “lost time,” as many think. Sound sleep is linked to better mental health, improved cardiovascular health, and fewer severe disorders and diseases.

**You See a Shrink?**

You can avoid the judgment that comes when you admit you need professional help from a mental health therapist. It is often the assumption that if you go to therapy that you have serious problems you cannot manage on your own and there is something fundamentally wrong with you. In reality, if someone is attending therapy, they tend to be on the healthier side of self-love and self-awareness. Because seeing a therapist is stigmatized, many people who want to seek help either often don’t, or they keep their therapy private so they do not invoke judgment.

Clinical psychologist Dr. Sherrie Campbell, author of Loving Yourself: The Mastery of Being Your Own Person, offers this advice:

- Everyone can benefit from therapy. We are not here to do life on our own nor are we equipped to be 100% objective in our own lives. Therapy is the perfect way to get that objective view, get to know yourself more deeply, analyze your habits of behavior and find solutions and resolutions to life’s everyday issues. Even healthy people seek therapy.
- Deniers don’t attend therapy. The unhealthiest people, the people who need treatment the most, are the ones who never consider therapy. In their mind they are never wrong, it is always someone else’s problem, and they should not have to change. The people who end up in therapy are those trying to deal with the relationships they have with these people who deny there is a problem.
- Own your personal journey. If you have chosen to attend therapy, be proud of it. Most people who are seeing the benefits of therapy tend to brag about how much the therapy is changing their lives. We all want to be happy, and when you communicate about your therapy as a major benefit to your life, you will be surprised how many people either ask for your therapist’s information or confess back to you they have also sought therapy. When you own and take pride in your growth, much to your surprise, many others will take your lead.
Creating an Environment that Encourages Employee Growth & Development

There are many benefits to organizations who provide an environment that encourages the growth and development of their employees. Working in an environment like that helps to improve employee motivation and leads to increases in both employee engagement and retention. In addition, providing resources that encourage employees to grow professionally results in a more skilled and productive workforce.

Importance of Supervisors Taking an Active Role in Each Employee’s Professional Development

Of course, it’s in our best interest as leaders to take an active role in the growth and development of each of our staff members. Unfortunately, many supervisors don’t prioritize working with their employees on their long-term growth because of the pressure and stress of day-to-day tasks and problems. It’s important for supervisors to recognize that, by focusing on both short-term issues and long-term employee growth concurrently, they’ll maximize the team’s success over time. Employee knowledge and skill development should be a core part of every supervisor’s performance management approach.

Start by Staying Current with Each Employee’s Goals and Interests

Your support of the professional development of your employees will be most effective when it’s customized to the needs and interests of the individual. Kevin Kruse, the author of “Employee Engagement 2.0”, recommends that supervisors meet with their employees twice per year to talk about their career goals, what types of projects they are most interested in, what skills they would be interested in further developing, etc.

It’s important to remember that many employees will not focus on their long-term professional development without the encouragement of their supervisor. When a supervisor recommends that an employee takes advantage of available resources such as tuition assistance to pursue an advanced degree, participation in a training class in an area of interest, or attendance at an industry conference to stay current in their field, it’s more likely that the employee will participate. and when they do, both the employee and the organization will benefit from their continuing knowledge and skill development.

Follow up to Encourage Their Progress

Follow up with your employees and ask about their progress. Provide recognition for their efforts and continually offer your support. It demonstrates that you care about them as individuals and as professionals. Research shows that motivation and engagement increases when an employee knows that their supervisor cares about them.

What are the five most commonly perpetrated bullying behaviors?

Research varies, but according to the Workplace Bullying Institute, the five most common bullying behaviors are:

1) falsifying the victim of errors not actually made (“Oh, now look what you’ve done”), but refusing to show or prove any error.  
2) Staring, glaring, or behaving nonverbally in order to intimidate, but clearly showing hostility.  
3) Discounting the person’s thoughts or feelings in meetings with peers (“Gee, duh, thanks for sharing, Susan.”)  
4) Using the silent treatment to “ice out” and separate the victim from others.  
5) Making up rules on the fly that the bully himself or herself does not follow but has then imposed on the victim.

Understanding the broad range of bullying behaviors can help you spot them. To learn more, visit www.workplacebullying.org.