Pamela Perry wins the top staff honor in the 2023 Awards for Excellence

Eight employees and three teams are being honored for outstanding contributions, creativity and compassion in the 2023 Awards for Excellence, presented by the Staff Council and the President's Cabinet.

Honorees are nominated by colleagues and selected by a panel of employees who volunteer as judges. Descriptions of all the awards, including criteria and eligibility, can be found on the website for the Employee Recognition Committee, which coordinates the annual awards.

Recipients will be recognized at an in-person event on April 25 from 3-4:30 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Student Union Memorial Center.

This year's winners are below.

**BILLY JOE VARNEY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**
Given to someone with a career of service to the University and the community who loves the University and acts in the spirit of Billy Joe Varney, associate vice president emeritus for planning and budgeting, who retired in 1988 after a 30-year career. Criteria: demonstrated efforts in practicing inclusive excellence in the workplace; service to the University; service to University employees; service to the community. The award comes with a $1,500 cash prize.

**Pamela Perry** | Senior Associate Dean for Eller Programs, Eller College of Management
Perry has been with the Eller College of Management for more than 30 years, spending much of that time as head of the undergraduate program. Many of her nominators said she has been a key driver of the college's success during that time.

"I would like to unequivocally state that Pam Perry's vision, strategic thinking, hands-on management and leadership over 19 years at the helm of the undergraduate program at Eller are the reasons why the Eller College is widely recognized as a top business undergraduate program, consistently ranked as a top 20 national program by U.S. News and World Report," wrote one nominator.

Another wrote about her commitment to diversity, citing her creation of student organizations such as the Hispanic Business Student Association and the Multicultural Business Student Association.

"She leveraged partnerships with companies and recruited alums to help provide professional development opportunities for students," the letter stated. "Through Pam's vision, these organizations have grown in number as well as membership through the years."

**CENTER/DEPARTMENT/INSTITUTE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**
Given to units for outstanding excellence in the management of people and resources. Criteria: culture of promoting a satisfying work environment; leadership in creating and sustaining a dynamic and engaging workplace; environment of high performance. The winning unit receives a plaque.

**W.A. Franke Honors College**
One nominator called the college "a small unit that serves 4,000 students and has an institutional impact far beyond these numbers," praising its faculty and staff for "cultivating a culture that promotes work-life balance, work satisfaction, inclusivity, a dynamic and engaging workplace and a shared expectation of excellence in our service to students."

Another praised the college's partnership with the Hispanic-Serving Institution Initiatives office on efforts including University-wide celebrations of Día de los Muertos and the launch of the HSI-Honors Consortium, a nationwide community offering honors colleges and HSI institutions professional development, network opportunities, best practices and more.

**TEAM AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**
Given for outstanding team achievement. Criteria: exceptional contributions toward efficiency and effectiveness of operations; outstanding service to the University community and/or visitors; special efforts in practicing inclusive excellence in the workplace. The award comes with a $1,500 prize that can either be distributed among team members or used to fund something that benefits the team as a whole.

**Business Affairs Shared Services**
Business Affairs Shared Services, part of the Division of Business Affairs, provides support in areas including
administration, purchasing, travel and human resources for many units. One nominator wrote that "I can recall several occasions when BA-SS was willing to meet early in the morning/after normal business hours or rearrange their workday to help us navigate difficult issues." Another said the team "provides strategic guidance, consistent tactical implementation and a general sense of partnership that makes our day-to-day jobs much smoother and easier."

**Department of Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences**

The employees of the department were praised for their response and continued dedication in the wake of multiple tragedies, including the August death of a graduate student in Zion National Park in Utah and the shooting death of department head and professor Thomas Meixner in October.

"Despite struggling with their own challenges (e.g., continuing to process their own emotions even today), they coordinated meetings, arranged services and continued to support the regular business of the department. Their courage, both in the moment and in the weeks and months that followed, have been crucial to the ongoing recovery of the HAS community," a nomination letter stated.

**INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE**

Given to individual staff members for achievements in activities beyond normal duties. Criteria: outstanding achievement in the workplace; exceptional contributions toward efficiency and effectiveness of operations; outstanding service to the University community and/or visitors; special efforts in promoting workforce diversity. Each award comes with a $1,000 cash prize.

**Kristy Clairmont | Legal Paraprofessional Program Coordinator, James E. Rogers College of Law**

Clairmont started at the University in August of 2021. In that short time, one nominator said she has far exceeded expectations. "Kristy has almost single-handedly built the Legal Paraprofessional pipeline and educational program in this state," wrote one nominator. Another seconded the praise for the workforce development program, calling it "not only brand new to Arizona, but also at the forefront of legal innovation across the nation."

**Richard Edmiston | Director of Business and Finance, College of Humanities**

Edmiston was praised in nomination letters for his even-keeled approach to handling any issues that come his way, both small and large. "His eagle-eyed approach to organizational leadership has guided our daily decision-making for more than a decade and we can't imagine running the College of Humanities without him," wrote one nominator. "It is no fluke that the college's number of grant applications and funded projects are significantly up, due in large part to his quick, diligent and thorough support," wrote another. Edmiston joined the University in May 2008.

**Lisa Garcia | Custodian, Facilities Management**

One nominator, who works in the Department of Neurology, praised Garcia's approach to customizing her duties around the work being done in the office. "Lisa is a pillar of our department. For years now, she has spent much of her time training incoming custodians, guiding them with her insight into how we, as scientists, work, and what our needs might be." Another said Garcia, who has been with the University for nearly 30 years, improves the morale of any team she is on. "Aside from Lisa's remarkable work ethic, Lisa is a genuinely kind and extremely empathetic person – qualities that are appreciated by anyone she interacts with. I always look forward to seeing Lisa when I come to work every day."

**Sharon Halvorsen | Senior Clinical Coordinator, Department of Medicine, College of Medicine – Tucson**

Halvorsen helps lead the University's Petersen HIV Clinics, which provide HIV treatment and prevention services for over 1,000 patients in Southern Arizona. "She is a tremendous asset to patient care and is invaluable in linking persons from underserved populations with resources and support services as they navigate the health care system," wrote one nominator. Another praised her as a collaborative colleague and mentor. "She is humble, humorous and inclusive, which brings the whole team together and inspires us all to achieve excellence." Halvorsen joined the University in July 2021.

**Dawn Hunziker | Associate Director, Disability Resources**

Hunziker has worked at the Disability Resource Center for more than 20 years, and one nominator said she continues to perform at the highest levels. "I am endlessly impressed with Dawn's energy, vision and detailed knowledge of accessibility. Dawn is passionate about creating a barrier-free, inclusive campus," read the letter. Another praised Hunziker's work during the shift to more remote class and event options. "Dawn and her team provided guidance and support to ensure accessibility during the pandemic for many campuswide webinars and Zoom sessions led by the provost's office and other areas."

**Bonnie Taylor | Director of Administrative Operations, Arizona Online**

One nominator praised Taylor's focus on diversity in her work with the online and distance education team. "Bonnie is a champion for inclusion and exhibits this through her mentorship, hiring practices and promotion/elevation of her team and her colleagues." Another cited her dedication to supporting veterans through her work. "She has taken the initiative to extend ODCE's (Online, Distance and Continuing Education) reach and honor veterans by organizing and securing logistical support for events like the Murph Challenge and Remember the Arizona 5K Run and Walk/Run in Tucson."
Taylor has worked at the University since July 2010.

**Betsy Woodhouse** | Associate Director, Arizona Institute for Resilience

Woodhouse, who joined the University in 2003, was praised by one nominator for her commitment to excellence. “She is extremely unselfish with her time and her ideas, which she shares without ever seeking recognition for her efforts. She is an exceptionally skilled financial manager that aims to find efficiencies in every process and every program.” Another praised her work to expand experiential learning opportunities for students. “Betsy conceptualized and implemented the Earth Grant program, a paid, year-long leadership development program for a diverse cohort of select UArizona students passionate about environmental and community resilience.”

In February, the University **honored more than 25 faculty members** [3] for achievements in research, student success, innovation and mentorship at the Outstanding Faculty Awards ceremony.

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